Commentary

Volume Seventy-two, Number One, July 1981

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Michael Novak
David Singer
Penn Kemble
Adam Meyerson

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Letters from Readers

The Evangelicals

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Fanaticism of the Right was a source of concern to many observers of the 1980 election. Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab ["The Election & the Evangelicals," March] reassure us on this score, but in doing so, they show a kind of contempt for religious values, buttressed by pseudo-scientific evidence, which borders on being its own brand of fanaticism.

Fanatics can be identified as those who make a case that the opposition "does not deserve to be in the debate at all." One way of doing this is to show contempt for the way the opposition understands itself by looking beyond what people say they are doing to a "deeper" level of motivation. This is exactly what Messrs. Lipset and Raab do to the evangelicals who are said to exhibit moral outrage only derivatively, as a function of the real loss they feel from the diminution of their accustomed status and security.

For Messrs. Lipset and Raab, real politics has to do with things like state intervention in the economy. According to them, citizens react to such politics as it affects their individual or national sense of status and security. . . . The feeling of loss with respect to these values produces a "mood" reaction, possibly one characterized by moral outrage. This—and not religious concern—is the explanation for the evangelicals' vote.

The analysis is supported by survey data which lend an appearance of objectivity. But Messrs. Lipset and Raab must certainly know that such data can be put to the service of any side of an argument. They are ambiguous because the voter does not even know himself what he will do with his various, often incompatible, opinions until he enters the polling booth, there to choose not a policy but a man to represent him in making policy. What the pollster ends up doing is imposing his own analysis of the opinion-poll data. . . .

DAVID B. BROYLES
Wake Forest University
Wake Forest, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I found the article by Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab most enlightening and helpful in dispelling some of the myths that have surrounded the formation of the Moral Majority. The data they present indicate how many different factors were involved in the results of the 1980 election and the diversity within the movement itself. Therefore, to attribute too much power to this group can be not only simplistic but perhaps even dangerous.

One of the current widespread myths is that all evangelicals belong to the Moral Majority. Even the authors fall victim to this one, by incorrectly asserting that the Moral Majority was established "with Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson at its head." Dr. Pat Robertson, the evangelical director of the Christian Broadcasting Network and its affiliate, CBN University in Virginia Beach, Virginia, has never been a member of the Moral Majority, much less its leader.

JOYCE STRELITZ
Virginia Beach, Virginia

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET and EARL RAAB write:

As David B. Broyles suggests, it would be foolish to write off the religious convictions of the American people. However, it is useful to know what factors tend to shape one kind of religious conviction as against another. It would obviously be wrong to deny that religious convictions provide the public moral underpinnings of American society. But the point is that specific religious convictions do not, in fact, directly shape the opinions of the American people on political issues. Those who hold fundamentalist religious convictions are heavily split on most political issues. Therefore, it is important to discover what other factors might be involved in shaping their political opinions. These are the same factors that affected Americans generally in the 1980 elections, whatever their religious convictions.

The conclusion that the religious and secular elements of the New Right network had much less impact on the outcome of the 1980 elections than they claim to have had does not rest on public-opinion data only. As we indicated in our article, Democratic candidates lost in Senate and House races both in those areas in which the political/religious Right targeted

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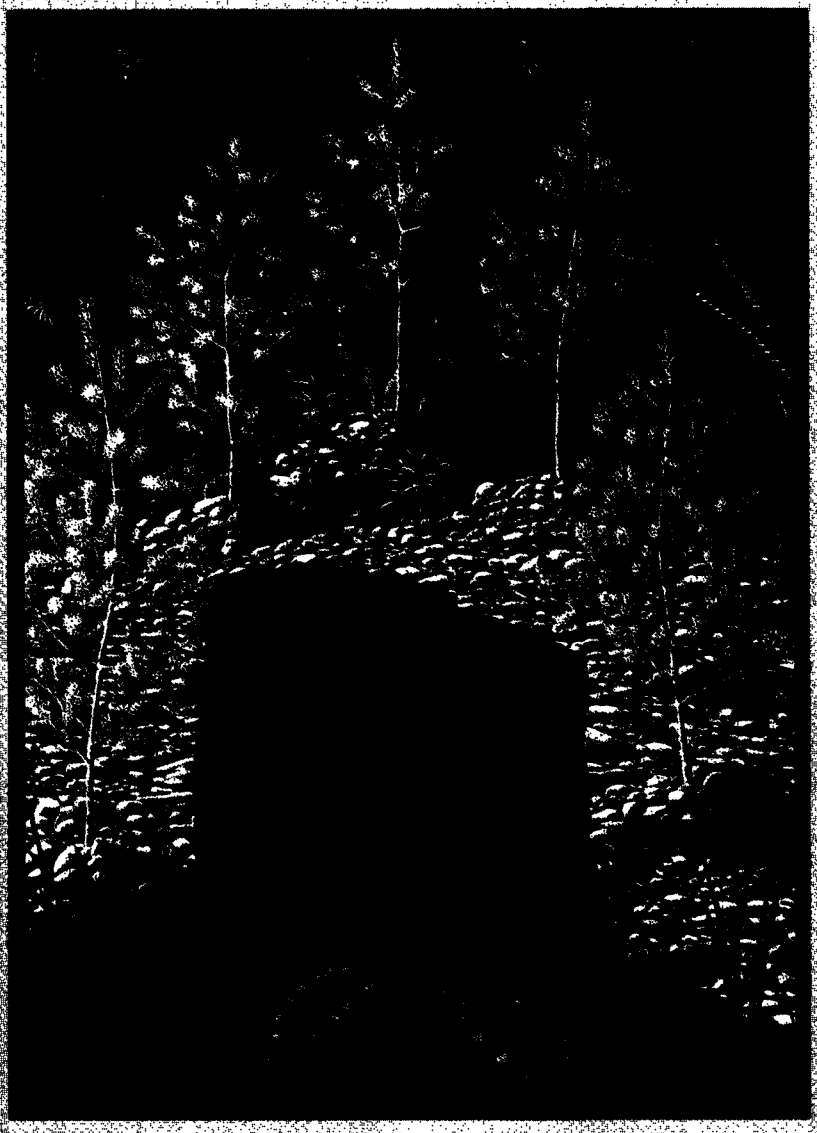

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candidates and those in which it did not.

Joyce Strelitz is correct: Pat Robertson has not been involved in the Moral Majority. As the Washington *Post* has recently demonstrated, one should not always believe the printed word. In this case, we relied on an article published in *Harper's* (L. J. Davis, "Conservatism in America," October 1980). We regret the error and apologize to Dr. Robertson.

Evolution & Dr. Sagan

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

One who criticizes Carl Sagan's scientific ideas should himself be better grounded in science than is Jeffrey Marsh when he takes Sagan to task for saying that evolution is a fact ["The Universe and Dr. Sagan," May]. Mr. Marsh is wrong on several counts.

First, where is it written in letters of fire that "the main characteristic of a fact is that it be directly observable"? A solid fact may often be established by inference, with direct observation not involved. Would Mr. Marsh accept it as a fact that he has a brain? Yet unless he has had his skull opened, or perhaps has had a cranial X-ray, his brain has never been observed directly. The existence of a brain inside his cranium is inferred from his possession of numerous other human—or vertebrate, or chordate—characteristics. Since he belongs to these categories, it is a solid fact that he has a brain.

Second, evolution is *not* a "hypothesized series of events" that occurred in the dim past when no intelligent observers were around. Evolution is occurring right now, and there is direct evidence to this effect. The average life of a species is about ten million years. Human history goes back only ten thousand years. Yet in this brief span—indeed, even in the last few years—there is direct evidence of the appearance or evolution of various new species. They include all cultivated species of wheat and corn; a species of *Spartina*, an English marsh grass; *Malheurensis*, a new species of wire lettuce discovered recently in Oregon; and triticale, a new species of grain artificially produced by hybridizing wheat and barley. New forms of bacteria are produced almost at will in the laboratory.

Mr. Marsh's "concept" of evolution is actually two concepts. The *fact* of evolution, namely, that evolution occurs, is universally accepted by all competent and knowledgeable biologists and geologists. The *theory* of evolution, that is, the mechanism by which the process takes place, is much in dispute. The present sharp controversy is between the gradualists or neo-Darwinians and the punctuationists. Without question, both schools agree in accepting the fact of evolution as thoroughly verified. . . .

STANLEY L. WEINBERG
Ottumwa, Iowa

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, Jeffrey Marsh asserts that " . . . the main property of a fact is that it be directly observable. . . ." Mr. Marsh's assertion is based on a Euclidean-Newtonian conception of a fact which since the advent of quantum theory and the principle of indeterminacy is not a scientifically tenable assertion. A fact no longer need be *directly* observable to be a fact. It is also a fact if it is *indirectly* observable through a *constancy* of statistically discernible manifestations. Thus, under the revolutionary impact of quantum theory and the principle of indeterminacy, a fact requires—just as in the case of the wave behavior of matter—a definitional duality: its main property can be that it is *directly* observable or that it is *indirectly* (statistically) observable. . . .

Some of the issues that remain to be resolved in evolutionary theory notwithstanding, its general validity is at the present beyond serious questioning. Or is it Mr. Marsh's contention that the man of today is the same sociobiological man of, let's say, one million years ago? What else would Mr. Marsh call the difference between the two but an evolutionary fact *directly* and *indirectly* observable by physical and cultural anthropology as well as biology?

I do agree with Mr. Marsh's line of criticism of Sagan's popular presentation of various aspects of science mainly because at times that presentation tends to fuse scientific speculation with scientific fact. But I totally disagree with his . . . statement that "the concept of evolution refers to a hypothesized series of events which by definition occurred at a time when there were no intelligent observers around," and that because of this Sagan's "assertion" that "evolution is a fact, not a theory . . . is obviously false." Here Mr. Marsh confuses one of the working hypotheses of evolutionary theory with its main didactic thesis which is the study of the gradual process of sociobiological development usually—but not necessarily—in a gradual manner from simpler forms to more complex forms. I do not think that it is necessary for me to go into the details of the evidence available supporting that process of development other than to remind Mr. Marsh of the thoroughly evidenced fact of the growth of the human brain during approximately the last three million years to its present size and complexity.

In synthesis, then, it can be reasonably said that evolution is a fact in its *general* aspect, but that contrary to Carl Sagan's assertion it is still theoretical in many of its *particular* aspects. . . .

D. A. DOMINGUEZ
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jeffrey Marsh assembles an extensive catalogue of charges against Carl Sagan. . . . To cite but one: Sagan is charged with the "absurd" claim that scientific advance requires thoroughgoing materialism, including the belief that the salvation of the world requires adopting the material view on a global basis. . . . Mr. Marsh then cites distinguished contributions to the advancement of science by Orthodox rabbis and Jesuit priests on the one hand and scientists like Newton and Kepler with profoundly religious views on the other. He thus implies that there is no necessary incompatibility between science and religion. Had he demonstrated in either or both instances that religious conviction was associated with scientific discoveries, he would have had a major argument. In fact, what he has demonstrated is an apparently limitless capacity among human beings for operating with non-intersecting categories of belief rigorously kept separate. Newton, Kepler, the Orthodox rabbis, and the Jesuit priests strictly adhered to the perspectives, criteria, and methods of science in dealing with scientific problems but reserved the religious perspective for other classes of problems. . . .

Mr. Marsh levels many other charges but the heart of his attack, his ultimate charge, is that Sagan

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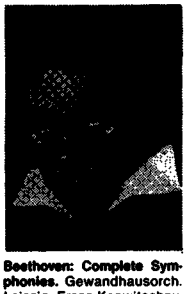

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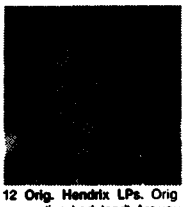

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"fail[s] to come to grips with the significance of religion." . . . Sagan, it turns out, is not the object of Mr. Marsh's attack; he is merely typical of the orientation of scientists. . . . Mr. Marsh evidently cannot accept the scientific view that chance factors account for the origin of the universe and of biological life, including human life; that evolutionary development converts simple life forms arising by chance into complex forms; and especially that life has no preexisting meaning but only the meaning generated and defined by human intelligence and will.

Mr. Marsh's position has it that the universe is the creation of God; its orderliness the sign of the characteristics with which He endowed it; and that creation continues in the personal relationship God has with the inhabitants of the earth. There is no doubt whatever that he knows the basis for the scientific view, but his profound commitment to religion makes it unacceptable to him and obliges him to seek some reconciliation between science and religion which may be what he means by coming to grips with the significance of religion. If that is his intent, conscious or not, he has failed in two ways; first, for not acknowledging the issue and, second, for not giving some possible common ground or an indication of one between science and religion.

WALTER ROSENAUER
Jackson, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jeffrey Marsh's critique of the ideas of Carl Sagan is thorough and thought-provoking, though it contains several flaws. . . .

Mr. Marsh treads on unstable ground when he asks:

> If people really come to believe, as Sagan suggests they should, that they have been brought into existence through blind chance in a vast and pointless universe which originated with a mysterious explosion and will end in oblivion, is it likely that they will also feel that they owe some sort of mysterious "loyalties . . . to the species and the planet" and that they have an "obligation to survive . . . to that Cosmos, ancient and vast, from which we spring"? Talk of loyalties and obligations makes sense in religious terms; to Sagan's world view the more likely response is a combination of nihilism and hedonism.

I do not agree. Need an individual believe in life after death and a hereafter to give his life meaning? Many people manage to live meaningful lives without these beliefs. The fact that the universe will destroy itself tens of billions of years hence need not stand in the way of human progress any more than the fact of a person's inevitable death need stand in the way of his personal progress. There is so much the human species can accomplish between now and the time our star goes off "the main sequence" or the time that the universe explodes into another "big bang" or contracts into an enormous black hole. The pot of gold at the end of this rainbow may not be heaven or eternal life, but it will be the knowledge that we have realized our full potential as an intelligent species, something which we can never experience if we allow the millennia-old loyalties to clan, tribe, religion, nation, and race to cause four billion years of terrestrial evolution to go up in a cloud of subatomic particles. Loyalty to species and planet may not seem as romantic as Mr. Marsh thinks when the alternatives are considered. It may be the only road to survival.

Mr. Marsh's statement that "thousands of years of history have shown that the widely held belief in an already received message from an even greater authority [than extraterrestrials] has not succeeded in making men love other men . . ." completely ignores the significance that a "close encounter," whether in "person" or through the medium of a radiotelescope would have for humanity. Sagan never claims that a message or a visit from extraterrestrials would create automatic "peace on earth and good will toward men." But it would, as he says, "deprovincialize biology," and at least give us a true knowledge of our place in the cosmos, which is something that no religion anywhere has really been able to do. The scientific impact it would have would be unparalleled and unequaled by any other discovery in the history of science. And the knowledge we would gain from a civilization that has been around longer than we have, perhaps eons longer, could teach us how to solve the problems that have all too often been the causes of wars. At any rate, we would gain a sense of our uniqueness in a universe of exotic life forms, and with the passage of time, a commitment to preserving this uniqueness that, for the first time, would lead humanity into the realization of a mature civilization.

ELLEN LEITNER
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jeffrey Marsh's penetrating comments on Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* apply equally well to a significant number of today's "orthodox" scientists. Mr. Marsh ought to have equal time on TV—or at least equal exposure—to show that there is more in science and society than is dreamed of in Sagan's (and conventional science's) cozy but unidimensional cosmos.

JULE EISENBUD
University of Colorado Medical School
Denver, Colorado

JEFFREY MARSH writes:

Stanley L. Weinberg and D. A. Dominguez have accused me of error in stating that a fact must be directly observable. They also argue that I was wrong when I described evolution as a theory rather than a fact. Walter Rosenauer assails me for my failure to admit that science has shown that the world is ruled by chance, not by divine providence, and Ellen Leitner is offended by my skeptical response to Carl Sagan's belief in salvation through extraterrestrial communication.

I must plead guilty to the charge of insufficient rigor in using the phrase "directly observable" in an attempt to spare readers a lengthy epistemological analysis of the complex (and controversial) relationship among such concepts as observation, fact, hypothesis, and theory. I hope that I can continue to avoid this exercise by agreeing in loose terms that a fact may be directly or indirectly observable, as long as there is not too great a gap between what actually is observed and the "fact" which is inferred. In the case of evolution, I continue to believe that there is too great a gap. A heroic effort of extrapolation is required to go from observations such as those on plants and bacteria cited by Mr. Weinberg to the theory summarized by Sagan and endorsed by my critics which postulates a process occurring over billions of years and relying on purely random occurrences to transform a hypothetical "soup" on the primeval earth into the full range of complex life forms and behaviors exist-

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ing today. Mr. Weinberg himself distinguishes between what he terms the "fact" of evolution and the "theory" of evolution of which he cites several variants. In the absence of direct observation, a quantitative theory of how the process happened on the postulated time-scale, and a set of falsifiable predictions, critics more rigorously inclined than I am have argued that evolution should not even be afforded the status of a scientific theory, so I believe that my original statement, "the concept of evolution is accepted by the mainstream of biologists," is both neutral and accurate.

Mr. Rosenauer seems undecided whether scientific activity and religious belief are non-intersecting (as he states at one point) or antagonistic (as he implies later). I would argue that in formal terms they are non-intersecting, but that underlying religious beliefs can have a profound motivating effect on scientific activity, as I believe they did in the particular cases of Kepler and Newton. I think that the viewer of Sagan's program on Kepler, or the reader of his section on Newton, would come to the same conclusion. It is of course possible to argue, as Sagan does, that these religious beliefs were a regrettable reflection of the prevailing intellectual climate of the times in which Kepler and Newton lived.

Mr. Rosenauer's one-sentence summary of my position is absolutely accurate. But his statement that the "scientific view [is] that chance factors account for the origin of the universe" I find impossible to understand logically. Leaving aside this technicality, the idea that the universe is ruled by chance is of course profoundly irreligious; it is also not a scientific statement. The existence of statistical laws, however, is no more an embarrassment to any theology which includes both divine omniscience and human free will than is strict causality.

If Miss Leitner really believes in Sagan's randomly generated universe, I do not see how she can speak of the "potential" of any species, which surely implies some teleological purpose to evolution. I fail to see why an encounter with an alien intelligence would give us a sense of our uniqueness; by definition we are more unique if we are alone. Finally, Miss Leitner's attempt to restate Sagan's case for the transcendental importance of communication with extraterrestrials (and, of course, as I neglected to point out in my review, there is not one scintilla of evidence for life in the universe outside earth) merely echoes his failure. The only people whose fundamental behavior might be altered by the receipt of an interstellar radio communication are those who believe that the medium is the message, and they are not a promising audience.

Anti-Semitism

To the Editor of Commentary:

I found Jonathan D. Sarna's article ["Anti-Semitism and American History," March] for the most part informed, balanced, and perceptive, but I would like to take exception to several of his points concerning the nature and extent of American anti-Semitism generally, and to certain criticisms he makes of my book specifically.

First, one minor point. I am aware of the ambivalent attitudes held by Ignatius Donnelly concerning Jews. In fact, I say the following in a footnote that Mr. Sarna may have missed: "In fairness to Donnelly, it should be noted that he expressed some sympathy for Jews in *Atlantis* (1882) and *The Golden Bottle* (1892), as well as ambivalence in other editorials of the *Saint Paul Representative*."

More broadly, I would like to challenge Mr. Sarna's interpretation on two grounds. I believe that anti-Semitism has been far more important and pervasive in our national history than previous scholars and Mr. Sarna are willing to admit, and that the persistence of anti-Semitism over time and within different social and economic contexts throws some doubt on his optimistic interpretation and on the socioeconomic explanation for American anti-Semitism. Instead, I believe it is important to draw attention to the role of stereotypes in perpetuating negative attitudes toward Jews.

What Mr. Sarna considers an overemphasis, I do in fact consider an understatement. On this point of subjective historical analysis, two reasonable scholars can dis-

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agree. I would, however, remind him of the important work of the eminent historian of German anti-Semitism, George Mosse, who has urged scholars to investigate popular culture. It is Mosse's contention that "only in this way will we be able to understand fully the continued influence of anti-Semitism which . . . seems to predate and outlast its immediate political or social relevance." Similarly, the late Jean-Paul Sartre, in a classic essay, focused on "the idea of the Jew" as the generating force in anti-Semitism. I believe these are profound insights that should be taken to heart.

Whereas previous interpretations of late 19th- and early 20th-century American anti-Semitism have correlated its ebb and flow with changing economic and social conditions, I argue in my book, *The Tarnished Dream*, that anti-Semitism was a consistent and widespread element of American life, pervasive in the culture on all levels, brought to the surface, possibly, by economic and social changes. Because anti-Semitism resulted from the images many Gentiles had of Jews, it could be strengthened but not dislodged by environmental changes. The social and economic environment merely provided the context within which anti-Semitism flourished.

The point is not that the racist rhetoric of people like Telemachus Timayenis was typical. Certainly he was an irrational extremist whose opinions were not taken seriously by thinking, feeling people. It is no surprise, then, that his views elicited "almost universal indignation." I would hope so, since they were equal to the worst of what Julius Streicher was to write in *Der Stürmer*. Rather it is that there were more subtle forms of ideological anti-Semitism that were pervasive in the culture. Perhaps the most unsettling aspect of this negative imagery is the acute depersonalization of the American Jew which the stereotypical projection helped achieve. Jews became figures merely, reified into objects, stripped of their uniqueness to fit the stereotyped roles expected of them. This phenomenon corresponds to the situation in Germany during the Third Reich, where Nazism was able to incite hatred of the Jews by evoking a certain stereotypical image in the popular mind, devoid of real or human characteristics. Quite obviously, anti-Semitism in America during the late 19th and 20th centuries never evolved into the terrible ending engendered by its German counterpart. At least in one respect, however, on the question of image, we did not have that far to go.

So what does all this mean? It is true that many immigrant groups underwent attack during this period. Here it must be said that Jews met neither as much hostility nor as much acceptance as certain other minorities. Rapid social and economic advancement, although exposing Jews to more social discrimination, also left them in a better position to deal with it. Once they emerged from the ghettos into the suburbs in the second generation, their newly-attained economic positions, educational levels, and their emerging defense organizations served as cushions, deflating raw prejudice. In fact, their remarkable success in America, a source of mixed admiration and envy, weakened the potential impact of anti-Semitism. Jews did not fall victim to as much violence as did the Italians or Chinese; they were not subject to as much discrimination as were the blacks; and there was no organized anti-Semitic movement comparable to the anti-Catholic American Protective Association. The relative mildness of American, as compared to European, anti-Semitism must be attributed not only to the more tolerant traditions of the United States . . . but also to the presence within the country of a great variety of ethnic and racial targets. Still, a good deal of distinctly anti-Semitic sentiment also emerged.

The fact is that anti-Semitism erupted even in those sectors of American society that were reformist and libertarian. The democratic impulse was not and may not always be resolute enough to overcome the psychological and social momentum of anti-Semitic stereotyping. It is true that America never visited mass physical oppression upon its Jews. But there are more subtle types of oppression—the economic, the social, and the cultural—that are also damaging and painful. Furthermore, the experiences of the 1930's, as well as public-opinion polls, have shown how stereotyping reinforced insensitivity and misunderstanding and contributed to governmental inertia in the face of an unprecedented human tragedy. During the critical decade of the 1930's which witnessed the rise of Nazism in Europe, there was a high degree of acceptance and approval of anti-Semitism in America. In addition, although many Americans sympathized with the plight of the refugees, they remained unalterably opposed to admitting them. Not even Jewish children were exempt from the public opposition to raising immigration quotas. There seems to be a correlation between this insensitivity and the public's perception of Jews. . . .

The result is that when you add up all the individual cases of American anti-Semitism they may not seem very significant, but when looked at in a different way—the callous lack of concern for Nazi refugees and a refusal to admit them leading to certain death for countless thousands—the outcome is painfully disturbing. So although America may have been different, it was not different enough.

MICHAEL DOBKOWSKI
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Geneva, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jonathan D. Sarna's article on the anti-Semitic tradition in American history and historiography deserves commendation on several counts: the author's familiarity with the literature in the field and his ability to place that literature in well-balanced perspective. Most important, however, is Mr. Sarna's perspective on the phenomenon of anti-Semitism in the American tradition itself—his ability to discern that the American past has been neither drenched in anti-Semitic incidents and movements nor blissfully free of them. Here is a new and important voice in American Jewish historiography, and a judicious one.

JULIUS WEINBERG
Cleveland State University
Cleveland, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

If one may indulge in a critique of the critic, it could be said that Jonathan D. Sarna's on-the-one-hand-and-then-on-the-other article in which he discusses works concerned with anti-Semitism in American history is exhausting, if not exhaustive. One comes away not knowing quite whether he believes that historians have been too cheery about the nature of anti-Semitism in America or too paranoid. Yet despite his disapprovals,

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Terror in the Streets

America has become a frighteningly violent land.

Washington, D.C. has a population of 650,000. Sweden and Denmark have a combined population of more than 12 million. Yet there were more criminal homicides in our nation's capital last year than in the two Scandinavian countries taken together.

New York City, with the same population as Sweden, has 20 times as many homicides. The U.S. has 100 times the burglary rate of Japan. More than one-quarter of all the households in America are victimized by some kind of criminal activity at least once a year.

Such is the grimy picture sketched by U.S. Chief Justice Warren E. Burger in an address to the American Bar Association.

Nationally, crime is on the rise in a trend that began early in 1979 after three years of stability. Terror skulks through our streets and parks, schools and suburbs.

Guns galore blaze away from both sides of the law-and-order fence. The number of handguns, both legal and illegal, is growing. More crimes are being committed with guns, and more people are arming themselves in fear and self-defense. A recent study in California reported guns in 37% of the homes.

"For at least 10 years, many of our national leaders and those of other countries have spoken of international terrorism, but our rate of casual, day-by-day terrorism in almost any large city exceeds the casualties of all the reported 'international terrorists' in any given year," Chief Justice Burger said. "Why do we show such indignation over alien terrorists and such tolerance for the domestic variety?"

Perhaps the answer is that, because there's so much crime everywhere, we've become inured to it. A decade ago, crime in the streets was a ringing public policy issue. Nowadays people seem resigned to the powerlessness of the criminal justice system to deal with it. So they hunker down in individual self-preservation, staying off the streets, double-bolting their doors, tucking pistols under their pillows, all the while losing faith in law enforcers and the courts.

The causal factors feeding the mounting tide of lawlessness are numerous and complex. They involve the interplay of the family, the schools, the courts, drugs, correctional attitudes, pressured prosecutors, and many more.

Economic causes cannot be discounted. Inflation and unemployment play their part. In recessionary times, burglaries and larcenies mushroom. The frustration of unrealized expectation kindles rage on the street. The poverty-ridden turn to crime as their only escape from hopelessness. Budget squeezes fetter law enforcement agencies and pull patrolmen off the streets.

All the more reason to get the economy rolling again so America can put more people to work, provide opportunity to the have-nots, and generate the tax revenues needed to fight crime and other social ills.

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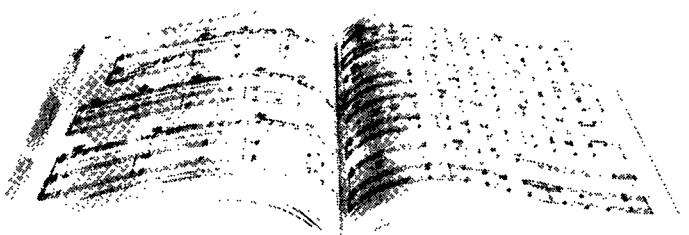

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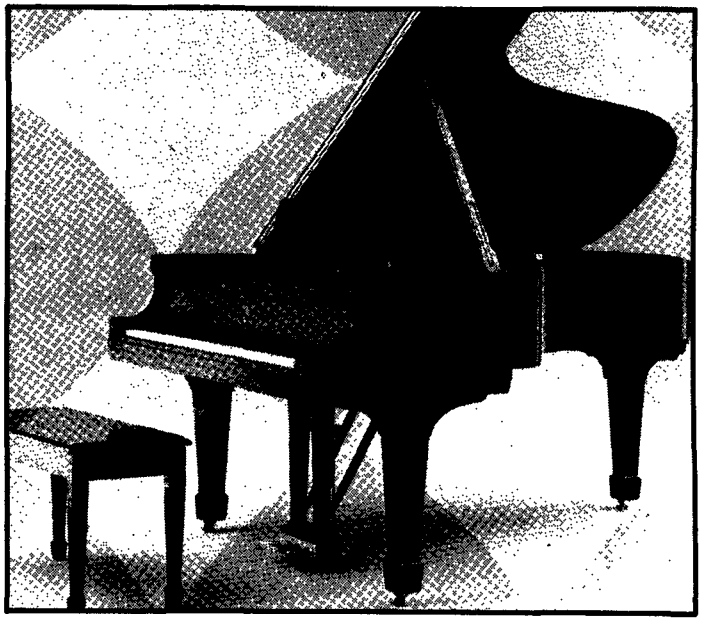

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he cannot avoid a measure of agreement with those on all sides of the argument. Of one thing he seems certain—that not enough of the minutiae of the Jewish experience have yet been unearthed and that these may be of greater significance in interpreting history than the large events already on record. So be it. Systematic research of this nature is all to the good and its value either will or will not prove itself in time.

Such research is not likely, however, to add much to a narrative for the general reader seeking a clear notion—in terms of anti-Semitism—of where we have been, where we are, or where we can expect to be in America. If I have left him a little sad by my schematic treatment of the subject in my book, *A Promise To Keep*, he in turn has left me a little amused by the bibliographic approach of his criticism, seeking to determine what books I failed to read, which authorities I failed to consult, and how much "scholarship" I overlooked. In doing so he exhibits more *chutzpah* than clairvoyance and makes me wonder whether he read the book or only the bibliography appended to it for the reader's convenience.

Of course, he also finds that I have "generally eschewed" interpretation and fallen back on the villain theory of history. Perhaps. But perhaps in my journalistic approach I have largely let facts, marshaled for that purpose, do the interpreting for the general but intelligent reader. And is there any question that the woods of anti-Semitism have been full of villains in the most precise sense of that word? Mr. Sarna worries about "the risk of oversimplification"; he might with more pertinence address himself to the risk of obfuscation.

NATHAN C. BELTH
New York City

JONATHAN D. SARNA writes:

I am grateful to Michael Dobkowski for his courteous and well-argued letter. Rereading my article, I found that our interpretations are far more similar than different. We both agree that American anti-Semitism has a long history; we both agree that American anti-Semitism differs from that found in Europe; we both agree that stereotypes—what I call the "mythological Jew"—play an important role in shaping anti-Semitic attitudes. I make the point, however, that the "mythological Jew" often was balanced by the figure of the "Jew next door" who seemingly gave the lie to every element of the traditional stereotype. Where Mr. Dobkowski mainly examines "received wisdom" about the Jew, I am more interested in the dynamic relationship between "received wisdom" and "perceived wisdom," and how people coped with the frequent dissonance between the two.

Mr. Dobkowski rehearses several comparisons between America and Nazi Germany. These are evocative but analytically unhelpful. Nor is it accurate to reduce the complexities of American refugee policy in the 1930's to a single simple cause: pervasive anti-Semitic imagery. In our conclusions, however, Mr. Dobkowski and I again agree. I say that America "has not been utter heaven for Jews [but] has been as far from hell as Jews in the Diaspora have ever known." He says that America "was not different enough." His glass stands half-empty; mine remains half-full.

Julius Weinberg's warm words are welcome, the more so because they spare me the wearisome task of reminding Nathan C. Belth what I made perfectly clear in my article. Sorry, Mr. Belth, but monocausal analysis is not my stock in trade. As for *chutzpah*, it strikes me as the height of *chutzpah* for an author of a survey text (especially one which claims "to sharpen, to restate the facts of American history, and to put the justifiable fears of anti-Semitism in perspective") to ignore enormously important works of relevant scholarship, and then to defend his action with words like "clairvoyance" and "reader's convenience." Obfuscation indeed!

Docudramas

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In Pearl K. Bell's otherwise admirable analysis of the "docudrama" phenomenon, as exemplified by James Michener's *The Covenant* ["James Michener's Docudramas," April], she writes that "it is the unequivocal certainty that one can trust Michener to deliver the goods, that his facts, significant or trivial, are always right" which accounts, in great part, for his remarkable success. But, in fact, the reader cannot trust Michener. More attention should be paid to Michener's disclaimer, in the novel's acknowledgments, that "where interpretation was concerned, I sometimes ignored [scholars'] advice."

This disclaimer the reader can certainly believe! Just to note some of the more obvious misinterpretations: *The Covenant* completely distorts the personalities of Piet Retief, Paul Kruger, Cecil Rhodes, Jan Smuts, Mzilikazi, and Barney Barnato (and it requires no small effort to distort the career of the colorful Barnato). Nor does Michener even approach the accuracy of the simplified survey-course pabulum common today in university circles in his portrayal of the Dutch East India Company in the Cape, the Great Trek, the mfecane, or the Anglo-Boer war.

By the time he eventually reaches the 20th century, after almost 15,000 years of storytelling, Michener's fidelity to fact becomes especially weak. In treating blacks and whites, he describes only the extremes, the ANC rebels and their supporters, the British colonial Anglophones, and the *Verkrampte* Afrikaners.

As Mrs. Bell points out, the popularity of docudramas like *The Covenant* arises from the suggestion of historical accuracy they offer. But the accuracy is only illusory. A Gatling-gun scattering of facts, central and peripheral, in the marshaled forces of an otherwise uninformed imagination is the source of the illusion. The result is a chaotic pseudohistory bending the course of events to suit the plot and prejudice of the author.

One of the most notable weaknesses of this form of pseudohistory is the author's inability to distinguish the important from the irrelevant and his failure to realize that even the naming of facts is a form of interpretation. As a result, a reader of *The Covenant* not conversant with the history of southern Africa is much worse off than the individual who avoids its weighty bulk. The latter is merely uninformed, while the former is perniciously deluded into believing that he does now understand its history.

No doubt docudramas will continue as successful media events attracting enthusiastic audiences as they appear in print and on television. But reviews must then distinguish history from fiction. . . .

JOSEPH H. UDELSON
Tennessee State University
Nashville, Tennessee

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PEARL K. BELL writes:

Joseph H. Udelson's tirade against James Michener's portrayal of South Africa's history, and his strictures against me for allegedly accepting it, is based on a confusion of the issues as well as on a misreading of my article. I pointed out that much of the interest in Michener's novel derives from the narrative's heavy coating of fact, which presumably instructs the reader about the history of the country. Mr. Udelson does not deal with the problem of facts, but indicts Michener's interpretations. He may very well be right, but that is beside the point I was making about Michener's popular success. Moreover, I made it clear that I regard Michener's historical "vision" as frequently simple-minded, and seriously wanting in the imaginative power that distinguishes first-rank historical fiction. The professor's quarrel is not with me but with James Michener's historical values and attitudes.

The Humanities

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Samuel Lipman, in his review of *The Humanities in American Life* [Books in Review, April], observes:

> A traditional answer to the problem of the intellectual content of the humanities might be that they consist . . . of the monuments of the Western tradition in both its secular and religious forms, along with a much more limited investigation of the highest achievements of other, non-Western civilizations. This view of the humanities finds them based in high culture, the enduring product of elites transmitted in most cases by writing but also by consciously created works of plastic, visual, and musical art.

He also writes:

> Though the humanities charm and move us because they are concerned with universal passions, their study has been advocated for centuries not because of this but because of the desirability of the values they embody. . . . They link ideals of rank and order, war and courage, sacrifice and suffering, discipline and obedience, individuality and community, rationality and revelation, and, not least, God and man, to the evolving context of Western history.

Clearly, in higher learning today we need the kind of "humane education" so well described by Mr. Lipman, the kind that cultivates our minds and characters, communicates and affirms ethical normality, and helps one develop the moral and intellectual discrimination required to distinguish between truth and error, right and wrong, noble and base.

Such an education demands the *rigorous examination of and reflection* on the accumulated wisdom of the past. If, for example, one seeks to discover the meaning of love, what modern works can compare with George Eliot's *Silas Marner*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and I Corinthians 13 (Saint Paul)? If one is interested in the nature of justice and of law, what contemporary books can compare with the writings of Plato, Cicero, and Aquinas? If one wants to learn what qualities a "good society" must have, why not read Confucius, Aristotle, Thomas More, Burke, and *The Federalist Papers*? . . . If one desires to understand better the intense demands of the human spirit, are there many contemporary books that can compare with the works of Sophocles, Hawthorne, and Dickens?

The study of the great books of the moral and intellectual giants of civilization will remind us of the true aim of education: the cultivation of wisdom and virtue.

HAVEN BRADFORD GOW
Arlington Heights, Illinois

Language, Round 2

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his reply [Letters from Readers, May] which, incidentally, is not a reply, to my letter about his article on language ["Why Madame Bovary Couldn't Make Love in the Concrete," February], Joseph Epstein writes: "I should prefer not to respond to Edwin Newman's letter, but instead allow its large-hearted modesty to speak for itself." No doubt. That is easier than dealing with the points I raised. It is also in keeping with the laziness of his article. But modesty, or its absence, is not the issue. My letter has not been answered.

There remains the matter of Mr. Epstein's own English. Why "should prefer," and, in reply to another correspondent, "I think I should like to pass on this one, too. . ."? Why the conditional tense? How does it apply in these cases?

It is shameful that COMMENTARY gave space to someone as poorly qualified as Mr. Epstein is to write about the language.

EDWIN NEWMAN
NBC News
New York City

JOSEPH EPSTEIN writes:

The reason I did not answer Edwin Newman's original letter at length is that I thought it—think it still—unworthy of response. In it Mr. Newman claims his own work has been responsible for the renewed interest in careful language; he prattles on about his publishing success; he implies that he has been the victim of much plagiarism; he suggests that the reason I did not name him in my COMMENTARY article is spite, since I am "an academic of the kind I hold responsible for much of the turgid nonsense that today disfigures English." But Mr. Newman's true difficulty is that he feels he does not receive all the credit due him.

But—and I would rather not have had to say this—the real reason I did not mention Mr. Newman is that, however many copies his books have sold, however many invitations he receives to speak at universities, however high his own opinion of himself, I do not think he has a very interesting mind. This is a judgment I base on my acquaintance with his work.

As for Mr. Newman's criticism of my use of the word "should," perhaps he does not know that in the first person "should" is quite legitimately preferred to "would" as "shall" is to "will." I could, I suppose, return his criticism by pointing to his use of the word "incidentally" in the first line of his letter—a word that H.W. Fowler remarks is not, in this usage, employed "by the best writers."

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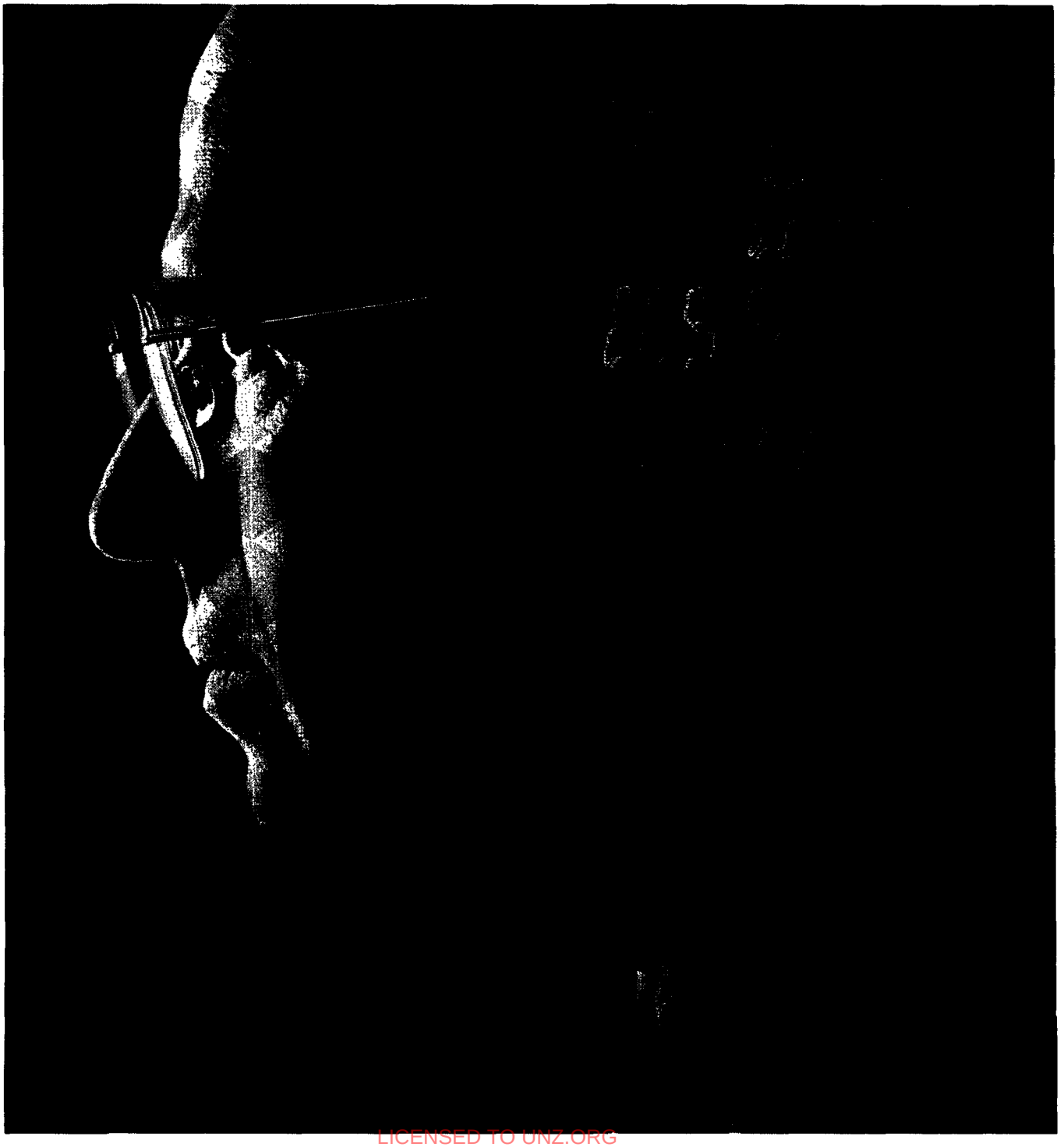

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The Timerman Case

Mark Falcoff

ONE morning in April 1977, twenty armed men in civilian clothes, claiming to be under orders from the Tenth Infantry Brigade of the Argentine army, invaded the Buenos Aires apartment of a well-known newspaper publisher and editor named Jacobo Timerman. Captured and blindfolded, Timerman was pushed onto the rear floor of an automobile, and led off to what subsequently became six months of solitary confinement, interrupted only by occasional trips to the toilet, meals, and sessions with an electrical torture-shock device. In September, he was brought before a War Council, that is, a military court, still uninformed of the charges against him. After a fourteen-hour session in which Timerman was pointedly questioned about every aspect of his life, work, political activities, and Jewish identity, the council ruled that there was no reason to hold him under arrest. This decision was reached late in the month, and communicated to the prisoner in his cell in mid-October.

However, instead of releasing him, the Argentine military government transferred him to house arrest for two additional years. In September 1979, the Argentine Supreme Court convened to consider Timerman's case, and for the second time found no grounds for his continued detainment. The high command of the army met and voted nonetheless that Timerman should remain imprisoned, preferably in a military garrison, and added gratuitously that the entire Supreme Court should resign for having arrived at their finding. Only when Argentine President General Jorge Videla threatened to resign himself was Timerman released, but, apparently as part of a compromise worked out with his fellow generals, the President ordered the publisher stripped of his property and his Argentine citizenship, and permanently expelled from his country. Today he lives in Tel Aviv, although he is a frequent visitor to the United States, where he has become—if one can countenance such macabre usage—a "human-rights celebrity." One of his most recent appearances in that capacity was as a silent witness-for-the-prosecution in the Senate confirmation hearings of Ernest W. Lefever, President Reagan's then-nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs.

Timerman's accession to international prominence is not surprising, for his case was the subject of worldwide concern and protest, involving at various times representatives in Argentina of the United States, Israel, and the Vatican, as well as various Jewish and non-Jewish humanitarian organizations. Indeed, few political prisoners in Argentina (or elsewhere) have been so fortunate in the range and importance of the friends who have rushed to their defense, and few of those friends, sad to say, have been as successful elsewhere. Now, however, Timerman is free to speak on his own, and he has done so in a book recently published under the title *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number.**

The appearance of Timerman's book and a renewed controversy in the Senate and the public prints over U.S. human-rights policy may be nothing more than a coincidence, but the earliest reviews have not let the opportunity pass without comment. John Leonard in the New York *Times* (May 7, 1981) led off with the really breathtaking assertion that Timerman's testament establishes that "Argentina is no more civilized than the Soviet Union, Iran, or Uganda," and that what the publisher confronted there in 1977 was nothing less than "Nazism."

Leonard's colleague Anthony Lewis has been no less hyperbolic. In a front-page article in the Times Sunday *Book Review* (May 10, 1981), Lewis discusses the Timerman book under 50-point letters spelling out "THE FINAL SOLUTION IN ARGENTINA." In the body of the article, however, some agendas slightly different from those of Timerman himself are brought forward for our consideration:

> The methods of modern tyranny [Lewis writes] repeat themselves. With this reality compare the political-science abstraction that has served since last January 20 as a premise of United States human-rights policy: the theory that right-wing

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* Knopf, 164 pp., $10.95.

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governments are merely "authoritarian" and do less damage to human rights than "totalitarian" regimes.

The principal author of that theory is Jeane Kirkpatrick, United States Ambassador to the United Nations. Elaborating on it in 1979 in the magazine COMMENTARY, she wrote that, unlike Communists, "traditional autocrats" observe "traditional taboos." For example, they respect "habitual patterns of family and personal relations."

I thought about Ambassador Kirkpatrick when I read Timerman's description of the Miralles family: father, two sons, and a daughter-in-law. Timerman heard they were tortured, and they were not the only ones.

What Timerman is describing, Lewis concludes, is "our century's special contribution to civilization: state terrorism." And for those slow to perceive what water is being drawn to whose mill, the Kirkus Service review of the Timerman book puts it baldly: "In heated, sometimes striving prose . . . is inscribed a Jeremiah-an lament, furious and sad . . . *and especially timely now that the U.S. is again cozying up to Argentina*" (emphasis added).

Q.E.D. The Timerman case "establishes" (a) that there are no differences between right-wing authoritarian states and Communist regimes; (b) that the Reagan administration is therefore hypocritical and two-faced in its moral standards; and (c) that the horrors in Timerman's book represent a fair sample of everyday life in "autocratic" regimes which Washington is now said to prefer in many Third World countries, regimes which—to judge, anyway, from the headlines of the Lewis article—are morally (and presumably even statistically?) comparable to Nazi Germany; and (d) in Argentina it has been the state which has constituted the real terrorist threat.

But if Timerman's book is to serve as a propaganda windfall for the foreign-policy establishment of the American Left, the leaders of that movement had best hope that most people confine their knowledge of the case to what reviewers say about it. It would not do to have too many people actually *read* Timerman's account. For within the confines of this slim volume (only 164 pages), there is a good deal more than a record of the author's travails at the hands of various police sadists, torturers, and military megalomaniacs. In fact, roughly half the text covers other matters. These include Timerman's autobiography, a discussion of Argentine politics between 1966 and 1973 (the date of Perón's return), and, most important of all, some remarkably revealing glimpses of military politics in the period between the overthrow of Perón's successor-spouse (1976) and Timerman's release three years later.

One might assume, charitably, that the reason most reviewers have chosen not to dwell upon (or in some cases, even mention) this half of *Prisoner* is that they themselves do not quite understand some of these complexities, and that, in any event, they are not relevant to the issue of human rights. But let us not be ingenuous: there are some embarrassing pieces of information in this book, from which Lewis and Company would be best advised to protect their special constituencies. Even a careful reader with no particular knowledge of the Argentine setting is bound to be puzzled and perhaps even troubled by certain apparent paradoxes and incongruities in the narrative.*

The truth is that Timerman drops some rather tantalizing leads in his autobiographical pages, but probably not one American in several million is in a position to pick these up and make complete sense out of them. For to assemble these fragments coherently, one must know something about a host of recondite topics—Peronism and anti-Peronism, anti-Semitism in Argentina, the role of that country's armed forces, the nature of politics in the second Perón period, and not least, the ways open to a penniless immigrant boy from Russia to rise to wealth and influence in a remote yet sophisticated South American society.

THE central drama around which Timerman's story actually revolves is the return in 1973 of former President Juan Perón after nearly two decades in exile. In a metaphorical sense, this was not an event which occurred all at once, but from the late 1960's on it could be predicted—barring the demise of its protagonist—with increasing asssurance. For during the fifteen or so years following Perón's overthrow in 1955, the Argentine economy continued to register, and with accumulating force, the decline which had begun during the late years of his presidency, and increasing numbers of citizens were coming to "remember" his regime (1946-55) in terms of the prosperity which had, however, actually been an accidental byproduct of a postwar boom in agricultural commodity prices. At the same time, Perón's populist approach to income redistribution (from which he had been withdrawing in the final two years of this period) had bequeathed to Argentina a trade-union movement firmly loyal to the deposed leader, an organized working class which at its lowest point represented about one-third of the electorate.

During these years all manner of experiments were launched to ease Argentine politics into a post-Peronist era: a civilian, democratic government determined to wean Perón's followers from his person (Frondizi, 1958-62); a civilian government elected under a complicated system which effectively disenfranchised Peronist voters (Illia, 1963-66); and a succession of military presidencies aimed at promoting economic development as a substitute for politics itself (Generals Onganía, Levingston, Lanusse, 1966-73). Alas, neither by per-

* This was the case of Eliot Fremont-Smith, who reviewed the book for the *Village Voice* ("Killing Jews," May 13-19, 1981). To his credit, Fremont-Smith brought his doubts to the surface, noting the particular paradox of the "Nazi state" being provisioned by Israel arms.

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suasion nor by force could the ghost be exorcised.

What was perhaps equally to the point, at the very same time an entire generation was coming to maturity which knew of Perón only what could be evoked from childhood memories (and sometimes, not even those) or conveyed by parental recall. In the picture of the vanished regime which came to dominate the imagination of these young people, the most appealing feature was probably its vaunted "anti-imperialism" and "independent" (i.e., anti-American) foreign policy. The fact that Perón's challenge to the United States was more bluster than reality was somehow overlooked, and of course the unflagging devotion of the working class enveloped the exiled leader in a retrospective glamor which quelled any lingering doubts. Thus by 1970, Perón found himself being courted by groups which had stood apart from his first regime and even actively opposed it—leftist students and Marxist intellectuals. Unlike the Argentine Left of the 1940's and 1950's, however, this successor generation had added to its Marxist breviaries the writings of Ché Guevara, Frantz Fanon, Muammar Qaddafi, and other heterodox sources, whose only common feature was a predilection for violence and direct action.

The role which this new Peronist "Left" played was utterly crucial to the decision of the Argentine armed forces to relinquish power to an elected government. For from 1970 on, paramilitary formations nominally loyal to Perón, such as the Montoneros or the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), began to assassinate prominent military personalities, including one former president. They also began to accumulate, through a chain of kidnappings and bank robberies, a treasury which rivaled the assets of any multinational corporation. Already blamed by the public for their inability to turn the economy around, the generals now found themselves humiliated by their apparent impotence in the face of a challenge from rank amateurs, who in the bargain were blighting the fruits of power. What, after all, was the point in holding a provincial governorship if one did not physically survive one's term?

One mark of the isolation in which the military found itself by the early 1970's was the degree to which the civilian opposition in Argentina responded to the escalating violence of urban guerrillas by proffering somewhat limp "sociological" explanations. On this subject, Timerman is especially scathing:

> Juan Domingo Perón used to say that "Violence from above engenders violence from below"—a statement that could be found in any Harvard, MIT, or Hudson Institute study on the aggressive feelings of populations with meager resources. A liberal statement, a sociological equation, which in an organized country might lead merely to a polemic on the ways in which such aggressiveness can be eliminated through housing, education, or public-health programs.
>
> In Argentina, however, Peronist youth understood at once what Perón was saying: he approved of violence and terrorism, and would lend his support to any murder, kidnapping, or assault that fit into his goals for the reconquest of power . . . .
>
> Anyone opposed to the tactical methods established by Perón would be executed by the boys, pushed from below by the violence from above.

The "violence from above" disguised as the "violence from below," however, did its work, and by 1973 the resistance of the generals was broken. Perón was allowed to return for a week's visit, although not to run for the presidency. In March, a stand-in for Perón, Héctor Cámpora, was elected, and in May, the Peronists formally returned to power. After a scant three months, during which he revealed himself to be the captive of the Peronist Left, Cámpora was ordered by Perón to resign and convoke new elections in which the great man could run on his own. Perón returned to Argentina in June, and in September was reelected with a thumping 62 percent of the vote. A month later, nearly eighty years old, he walked back into the Government House he had abandoned in disgrace nearly twenty years before.

In spite of the overwhelming endorsement he had received from the electorate, Perón could not inaugurate an era of peace and concord; too many different expectations had been raised by his return. The Left, of course, expected him to reveal himself as a Marxist, and in truth, Perón had done an excellent job of stringing these people along (and using them) during his late years of exile. But—quite apart from Perón's record, his personality, and his most intimate views—this was hardly a likely eventuality. For the largest element supporting his return was a "traditional" following which was populist rather than Marxist. That is, it favored a style of government which combined personalism, state capitalism, gangsterism, and bread-and-butter unionism with a rather haphazard showering of social-welfare benefits on the "loyal," rather than a systematic restructuring of Argentine society along more egalitarian lines. The ranks of traditional Peronism included everything from right-wing Catholics to trade-union militants, from industrialists to provincial intellectuals; this, after all, was precisely the constituency which Perón had represented during his first period of power. All the talk about "national liberation" and "Third World" solidarity was a later addition, and represented (as Perón well knew) far fewer votes.

As long as he was but a distant hope, Perón could inspire the loyalty of both wings. Once in power, he was forced to choose, and choose he did: first, by selecting as his Vice President his wife, María Estela ("Isabel"), generally identified with the traditionalist wing; and then, several months after his inauguration, by officially inviting the Left to subsume itself into his movement of class

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collaboration and national reconstruction (as he called it), or depart.

Even before this confrontation, however, elements of the Peronist Left, unable to slacken a disposition to combat which had been wound to feverish intensity, were at war with the regime they had helped to install. Their peremptory dismissal by Perón at a public ceremony only provided a new reason to persist in their acts of violence. And then, after Perón's death in July 1974, the guerrillas launched an all-out offensive, assuming that they would be the inevitable beneficiaries of the fall of his incompetent spouse.

This was not, however, the case. For the guerrillas were quickly joined by a bewildering variety of contending forces in what became a sort of civil war in miniature. These included, in Timerman's description,

> rural and urban Trotskyite guerrillas; right-wing Peronist death squads; armed terrorist groups of the large labor unions, used for handling union matters; paramilitary army groups, dedicated to avenging the murder of their men; para-police groups of both the Left and the Right vying for supremacy within the organization of federal and provincial police forces; and terrorist groups of Catholic rightists organized by cabals who opposed Pope John XXIII's proposals to reconcile the liberal leftist Catholic priests seeking to apply—generally, with anarchistic zeal—the ideological thesis of rapprochement between the Church and the poor.

To which he adds that

> these, of course, were only the principal groups of *organized* or systematized violence. Hundreds of other organizations involved in the eroticism of violence existed, small units that found ideological justification for armed struggle in a poem by Neruda or an essay by Marcuse. Lefebre might be as useful as Heidegger; a few lines by Mao Zedong might trigger off the assassination of a businessman in a Buenos Aires suburb; and a hazy interpretation of Mircea Eliade might be perfect for kidnapping an industrialist to obtain a ransom that would make possible a further perusal of Indian philosophy and mysticism to corroborate the importance of national liberation.

The far Left and the far Right came to employ similar tactics, indeed, at times, the very same tactics. The Montoneros, Timerman reports, succeeded in "forcing five hundred large business firms to pay a monthly protection sum against kidnapping or assault of their executives." The Triple A—a right-wing terrorist organization—obtained a copy of this list and forced "these five hundred large firms to subscribe to its financial support. The companies thus [paid] both organizations." Timerman does not say so, but extrapolating from events of this sort elsewhere in Latin America, it is not implausible that the Triple A obtained the Montoneros' list because some members of one group were also members of the other.

It was to put an end to this situation that the Argentine military, under Army Commander General Jorge Rafael Videla, overthrew the government of Isabel Perón on March 24, 1976. The record shows that this act was endorsed by the broadest spectrum of political forces in Argentina, including one of the most influential and prestigious newspapers in the country, *La Opinión*, edited by one Jacobo Timerman.

ABOUT this remarkable newspaper Timerman has very little to say, and what he tells us is not always true. He remarks that it was often likened to *Le Monde*, but "in relation to the ideological position of the French daily, one could say that *La Opinión* was a typically liberal newspaper." While the veracity of this statement depends entirely upon how one defines "liberal," the comparison with *Le Monde* seems more exact, since *La Opinión* was a newspaper of very high editorial quality which frequently made up what it did not know. Further, like its French counterpart, it combined a vague sort of international and cultural leftism with an elegant anti-Americanism—a Gaullism, as it were, packaged for Argentine consumption. All of which amounts to saying something which Timerman flatly denies—that *La Opinión* was (or at any rate, soon became after its founding in 1971) a Peronist newspaper.* In any case, it could hardly have been anything else. To start a newspaper is no idle enterprise, particularly in a country like Argentina for an immigrant with no family ties to the leading banking families. Quite apart from credit, it requires advertising, and on this score Timerman is utterly candid: *La Opinión* could not have survived without large blocks of space taken by public-sector enterprises, which in Argentina represent a very significant portion of the industrial plant, and whose publicity budgets equip any government with a marvelous tool for influencing the tone of the press.†

But Timerman's Peronism was not wholly mercenary: he was convinced, as were so many Argentine professionals, businessmen, and intellectuals who read his paper, that only Perón could reconcile the pressing agendas of nationalism, redistri-

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* One serious difference between *Le Monde* and *La Opinión* was that the latter never carried on a flirtation with the Palestinians. But—quite apart from Timerman's own heritage and commitments—this was not a particularly heterodox position for a newspaper in the Peronist mainstream. Perón himself had always been moderately friendly to Israel, and in fact during his presidency, 1973–74, Argentine delegations generally refused to subscribe to "anti-Zionist" resolutions retailed at the United Nations and at conferences of the "nonaligned."

† It has been reported that Timerman's "excellent connections" in the government and the labor unions made it possible for him to compel the German-language daily *Argentinisches Tageblatt* to print *La Opinión* for four years below cost, a figure estimated in 1975 to represent $40,000 a month. See Benno Weiser Varon, "Don't Rescue Latin American Jews," *Midstream*, December 1980.

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bution, economic growth, civilian government, and social peace. Nor was his shift to favoring a military coup in 1976 necessarily inspired by dishonorable motives; his paper simply reflected the general flow of Argentine opinion, which after Perón's death, the revealed incompetence of his successor, and the unremitting threnody of terrorist violence, came to despair of a civilian political solution.

Thus the picture of a Jewish liberal democrat editing something like the old New York *Post* in Buenos Aires is very, very wide of the mark; *that* sort of liberalism holds no appeal for Argentines, and Timerman would have been a far less clever man had he propagated it. If Timerman's liberal admirers in the United States were able to read the back numbers of his newspaper, rather than to accept at face value what he himself says about it, they might be no less determined to protest his arrest and treatment in captivity, but somewhat more skeptical of his claims to represent their values.

THE question inevitably arises: if Timerman was so successful in negotiating—and indeed, turning to his own benefit—the shifting currents of Argentine politics, why, then, was he arrested at all? Here, too, *Prisoner* tells us what at best is only part of the truth.

After the coup which deposed Isabel Perón the military initiated a sweep of known or suspected elements of the violent Left. As is necessarily the case in any urban setting where the forces of order must contend with the virtual invisibility of the enemy, a blanket repression is often the only means which offers any hope of success. In such situations—let us not mince words—the distinction between terrorist and suspect, between sympathizer and activist, indeed, between innocent and guilty, is often lost—but in the end the job can be done, if the will is there to do it.

This is precisely what the Montoneros and the ERP never expected, forgetting (if they ever knew) that army officers are not vacillating liberals, and that with every kidnapping, murder, and bombing, the guerrillas themselves were untying the last cords of professional military restraint.* In his book, Timerman describes in moving terms his own gradual disillusionment with this process, which was very far from what he had in mind in supporting the coup ("to terminate the violence of both the Left and Right . . . to curb terrorism through legal channels"), a disillusionment which, he says, led him to begin systematically publishing the names of *desaparecidos* (literally, "persons who have disappeared"; persons abducted without due process), until his newspaper was shut down and he himself joined the ranks of Argentina's growing army of political prisoners.

What he does not mention, however, is a little episode which occurred in early April 1977—that is to say, about the time of his arrest. A young Argentine Jewish banker with connections in Belgian and American financial circles, by the name of David Graiver—who happened to be Timerman's principal partner in the ownership of *La Opinión*—was forced to declare the bankruptcy of his New York operations, which centered around the American Bank and Trust Company. Graiver himself is alleged to have died shortly thereafter in a mysterious plane crash in Mexico. The rest of the story, reported at the time by leading journals in the United States, has been told by a former Israeli diplomat with broad experience in South America:

> Graiver's wife . . . returned from Mexico to Buenos Aires in order to liquidate her husband's Argentinian holdings. One day, she received an unannounced visit from Colonel Camps, chief of police of the Province of [Buenos Aires]. The Colonel and those who accompanied him did not wear their uniforms, but Mrs. Graiver recognized their military gait and made a fateful mistake. "But we have to let you know," she said, "that you have nothing to worry about! Your money is safe!" She believed she was speaking to a delegation of the Montoneros, the country's strongest and wealthiest guerrilla movement. Colonel Camps perked up his ears: what money was Mrs. Graiver speaking about? . . .
>
> [The Montoneros, it appeared, had] picked Graiver as their secret investment broker. Why Graiver? They had been "in business" with him—they had kidnapped his son and had received his ransom.
>
> [With this apparent discovery], all members of the Graiver family, including his parents, were arrested. And so was, on April 15, 1977, a business partner of David Graiver—Jacobo Timerman. Guilt by association? To the military mind it did not seem far-fetched that Timerman should have known of the Graiver-Montoneros connection.†

Understandably, Timerman has no desire to raise this matter; in fact, he prefers not to discuss it at all. But he has provided some rather convincing indirect evidence that it is far from irrelevant. During his recent trip to the United States, when pressed to explain his connections with Graiver by a generally sympathetic interviewer for the *Wall Street Journal*, the best Timerman could manage was the statement: "The questions you are asking me . . . these are the questions they were asking me when I was tortured." Just so.**

The Graiver piece of the puzzle fits admirably well with the next, which Timerman *does* provide—namely, an account of the extraordinary conflict and confusion which his case provoked within the

* Perhaps indeed there were some Left guerrillas who imagined that by provoking wholesale repression, the Argentine population would be properly "radicalized" and eventually respond to a call for a general uprising. If so, they were profoundly mistaken.

† Varon, *op. cit.*

** Seth Lipsky, "A Conversation with Publisher Jacobo Timerman," *Wall Street Journal*, June 4, 1981.

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highest ranks of the Argentine army. On one level, it was by no means clear that Timerman was guilty of subversive activities, a caveat which carried considerable weight with President Videla. On another, Timerman had excellent connections with the highest ranks of the military—so much so, in fact, that had his enemies within the high command not prevailed, the defense counsel at his "trial" would have been none other than Lieutenant General Alejandro Lanusse, a member of one of the nation's most socially distinguished families, and President of Argentina from 1971 to 1973! On yet another, Timerman admits that in his own mind he was never sure President Videla even knew about plans to arrest him until it was too late.

Why, then, did not the President merely recognize that an error had been made and rectify it by signing a release order, or, at the very least assure Timerman of the benefits of due process? The answer to that question is extraordinarily interesting, and Timerman does not hesitate to give it. After the fall of Isabel Perón, each intelligence branch of the armed forces undertook its own counter-guerrilla operation. Various military leaders became, in Timerman's telling, virtual warlords in zones under their control, "whereupon the chaotic, anarchistic terrorism of the Left and of the fascist death squads gave way to intrinsic, systematized, rationally planned terrorism." But this was not a development that occurred without difficulty, for over the question of how to carry out counter-guerrilla operations the Argentine military leadership split into two factions—"moderates" and "extremists."

The "moderates"—the term, please note, is Timerman's, not Ambassador Kirkpatrick's or my own—"strove to accomplish peaceful acts. . . . They were, are, and will always be opposed to all excesses." The problem was that "the moderates of the military revolution had . . . been unable to gain control over repression or over, in many instances, the official operation of parallel justice." Timerman believes that he was kidnapped by the "extremist" sector of the army, but that, far from approving the act, President Videla and (now President, then Army Commander) General Roberto Viola "tried to convert my disappearance into an arrest in order to save my life."

One can, of course, deplore the inability of Generals Videla and Viola to master the situation effectively, and even comprehend the obloquy to which both men have been subjected in the Western liberal press; after all, with whom else could one inquire after the fate of Timerman save the duly constituted and diplomatically recognized authorities? And yet. . . . Although as his book winds to its close Timerman uses ever more frequently the term "Nazi" to describe the present Argentine state, his description of its inner workings evokes not the memoirs of Albert Speer but a ramshackle Balkan kingdom designed by Borges or Kafka. Here Timerman was, a political prisoner in a country whose president and army commander were fairly good personal friends of his, two generals whose own position in the tangled web of military politics required them to pretend to be less concerned over Timerman's fate than they really were; both men had to defend before world opinion and multilateral diplomatic inquiry an abduction of which they did not approve; and finally, they had to utilize the lever of international pressure so as to appear "forced" to do what they undoubtedly wished to do anyway, but not in so humiliating a fashion as to lose all credibility before their fellow officers.

While Timerman remained under house arrest, a complicated series of negotiations was carried out in barracks and service clubs, in suburban villas and in the windowless buildings that housed the various intelligence services. In the end General Videla just barely survived the process; forty-eight hours after Timerman's release, the government had to quell a military uprising in the city of Córdoba, led by "extremists" bitterly disappointed at the result.

IN ALL of these events, to expect no appearance whatever of the "Jewish question" would simply be too much to hope for. But if Timerman offers some chilling insights into the nature of Argentine anti-Semitism, he does not resolve very clearly whether his Jewish identity was a particularly wounding misfortune, or the secret amulet which saved his life. Or rather, he holds out both possibilities, which, for all their untidiness side by side, probably comes closest to the truth. But let us take this matter by parts.

It is certainly true that anti-Semitism exists in Argentina, although precisely *how* serious a problem it is cannot be fixed with certainty. Even Argentina's Jews themselves, who should be the leading experts on the subject, have never been able to agree; outsiders therefore can only offer impressions. In certain ways it might be said that the contemporary position of Jews in that country resembles that of the community in the United States during the 1920's. Comparisons of this sort are of course inevitably imperfect: for example, Argentine universities are free of restrictive admissions practices; even the most luxurious hotels and resorts do not generally refuse admission to Jews; and Jews may live in any neighborhood in which they can afford to rent or buy. Withal, there is still considerable social and business discrimination which nonetheless has not prevented some outstanding individuals (Timerman among them) from making their way to the top. Perhaps the United States in 1929 or 1935, but not Germany—in 1934 or any time thereafter.

This still leaves plenty to discuss and deplore, but again, one must define clearly the boundaries of the subject. The political culture of the extreme Right in Argentina has always included anti-Semitism, but in spite of that country's many military governments since 1930, these people have had surprisingly little influence on the wel-

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fare (or lack of it) of the Jewish community. Instead, they have languished in a curious cul-de-sac of "historical institutes," little magazines, musty parish houses, and, in recent times, in right-wing "action" groups and among certain formations of the police. For these people, miraculously preserved in the spiritual atmosphere of the year 1937, Communism, Zionism, labor unions, free love, and Hollywood films are all of a piece, and nothing which has happened in the last two decades, not even the international campaign against Israel orchestrated by the Communist bloc, has attracted their notice. These are the people into whose hands Timerman had the misfortune to fall during his first six months of confinement, and it was their residual influence at the higher ranks of the military which imparted the specifically anti-Semitic overtones to his trial (though not, it must be emphasized, to the actual outcome of that event).

But if the far Right in Argentina has failed to discern the difference between Communism and Zionism, the extreme Left has not, and this notwithstanding the fact that quite a few extreme Left groups have harbored Jewish members. Among the Montoneros, the ERP, and their analogues, as Timerman acutely observes, "hatred of the Jew adds a spicy and delicious ingredient into the struggle for World Revolution." To which he adds, with extraordinary insight, that

> the Jew can satisfy [the] quota of irrational hatred required by every human being but which systematized ideology such as the extreme Left is unable to acknowledge in its relationship with society. Therefore, why not leave the window open, at least a crack, to allow that hatred to filter in? And against whom else if not the Jew?

This is more than a literary point, since Timerman reveals that, prior to his abduction, he had received death threats from both groups—on one occasion, in the same day's mail—and that he remains convinced to this day that if the Left had managed to seize power in Argentina, "I would have been placed against the wall and shot, following a summary trial. The charge: counterrevolutionary Zionism."

Does the fact that he fell into the hands of the extreme Right rather than the extreme Left make any difference? It would seem so. In Timerman's telling, there are no palms of mercy to be distributed among his captors, since he believes they spared his life only because they had decided he could be more useful alive, "confessing" leftist Zionist connections with left-wing Argentine terrorism. Then, at last, these people would be granted the pogrom that so many previous military regimes had denied them.

Perhaps this is indeed an accurate reconstruction of the mind-set of his tormentors. But note: *no such connection was established.* The military court was compelled to dismiss the charges against Timerman, and meanwhile an international campaign enlisting the support of such august personages as the President of the United States and the Pope put sufficient pressure on the Argentine government to effect Timerman's eventual release. It is not a frivolous exercise to speculate upon what constellation of forces, domestic and foreign, would have been capable of restraining the hands of the ERP had they been successful in *their* plans to abduct him.

MEANWHILE, what was happening beyond the prison gates? This question is utterly crucial, for upon it hinges the precise political nature of the military regime. At times Timerman resorts to metaphors used to describe typically totalitarian societies—people paralyzed by fear, afraid to acknowledge even their best friends should the latter fall afoul of the Machine. But at other times, and rather more often, it seems to me, he suggests that whatever his own difficulties (and those of his fellow prisoners) life in the world outside simply went on much as it always had—and with few exceptions, the business community, the press, the political parties, and other civic forces willingly accepted the stewardship of the military, excesses and all, as a costly but necessary sacrifice.

This version is of course less flattering to his countrymen than the first, but it is also pregnant with an embarrassing possibility—that in spite of the wave of right-wing terror centered in certain places of detention, *in Argentine society as a whole* the regime confined its interests to peace and public order (as it chose to define them, of course) rather than extending them to a reshaping of institutions along totalitarian lines. This still did not make that country an object worthy of admiration by liberal democrats in 1977, but for most Argentines, including, it must be said, one of the largest Jewish communities in the world, it was not an intolerable place to live.

This last piece of information is very inconvenient, for how can what Timerman repeatedly refers to as a resurrection of the "Nazi state" permit Jews not only to exist within its borders, but even to prosper? To resolve this contradiction, he introduces a bizarre concept which might be described as Holocaust-by-Installments, a notion which also allows him to ventilate all of his resentments against the organized Jewish community in Argentina. Here are some samples of his reasoning:

> The point of reference for the Jewish leaders of Buenos Aires, as for Jewish leaders in many parts of the world, is the horror of the Holocaust. . . .
>
> For me, the point of reference is equally the responsibility of Jews in the face of any anti-Semitic act. The point of reference is Jewish action; the Jewish silence of the Hitler years towards Hitler's acts.
>
> I was never able to understand how the horrors of the Holocaust could diminish the significance of the violation of Jewish girls in clandestine Argentine prisons. . . .

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To my mind, always the incorporation of the Holocaust into my life meant never to allow the Argentine police to feel that they were authorized to humiliate Jewish prisoners. *I never imagined that there would be Jewish leaders who would utilize the horrors of the Holocaust to maintain that the most advantageous response to certain anti-Semitic aggressions of a much less brutal nature was silence* [emphasis added].

From this tendentious point—of which more below—Timerman jumps to a comparison between the Jews of Argentina and the German Jewish community in 1938. Needless to say, the former do not come out very well, their leaders likened to the Judenräte of Nazi-occupied Europe, that tragic mechanism by which the Germans during World War II utilized existing Jewish bodies to organize the transshipment of their co-religionists to "the East," never to return.

But is this in fact what has been going on in Argentina during the last five or six years? It is true that, as Timerman says, "the Argentine military, as in Germany, has seized banks, business firms, jewelry, properties, and furnishings belonging to persecuted Jews." He does not mention, however, that the same regime has confiscated the assets of "persecuted Gentiles." For the truth is that the criterion of "persecution" has not been ethnic identity but subversion, real or imagined. This makes life no more pleasant for the "persecuted" (many of whom were actually guilty, however wrongly treated they have been from a judicial point of view), but it introduces a massive distinction which Timerman has no right to blur.

Nor is it a fact that the Argentine military is systematically—or unsystematically, for that matter—eradicating the Jewish population of that country. It should be unnecessary to have to say this, but none of the mechanisms associated with the Holocaust, including forced identification, racial "passports," restrictions on professional and economic life, exclusion from educational institutions, much less forced labor camps or extermination centers—is in operation or formation. The Jewish Agency and a large Israeli diplomatic mission pursue their activities unobstructed, indeed indirectly assisted by the host government. Nor are Jews who wish to emigrate to Israel, the United States, or elsewhere prohibited from departing with all of their property intact and their liquid assets freely convertible into any currency.

This still leaves much to be desired in the lives of those who remain (as the leaders whom Timerman attacks for their "silence" have been the first to admit), and it may well be that those who have fallen afoul of the forces of order have consistently suffered, as Timerman claims, with redoubled intensity because of the fact that they are Jewish. Police brutality toward prisoners, whether inspired by racial hatred or ideological differences, is always worth protesting, but it serves no useful purpose to distort the true dimensions of the problem: it cheapens the lives of those exterminated in Central and Eastern Europe, while doing less than nothing to alleviate the suffering of those political prisoners in Argentina who happen to be Jewish.

This still leaves the *pièce de résistance:* the statement attributed by Timerman to Dr. Nehemias Reznitsky, president of the political umbrella organization of the Argentine Jewish community, that not all anti-Semitic acts ought to be protested, "for that would create a confrontation with highly powerful sectors of the army. There was a better tactic: to protest some and maintain silence over others, in an attempt to negotiate and survive." On this point, Dr. Reznitsky will have to have his own day in court. But perhaps an outsider may be permitted this one observation: some of the Jews arrested in the anti-guerrilla campaign did in fact have connections with the violent Left. Others were legitimate objects of suspicion. Still others were innocent. Can the leaders of the Jewish community be faulted for respecting these differences and proceeding on each case according to its separate merits? In a society with a functioning judicial system and civilian control of the police, the process would require fewer compromises and less tortured maneuvering. But the breakdown of civilian government in Argentina was not the fault of either the generals or the Jews; and if some of the latter suffered at the hands of some of the former, the ultimate responsibility lies not with the leadership of the Jewish community, but with those anxious, neurotic young men and women who—in Timerman's words—converted "terrorism and violence" into "the sole creative potential, the sole imaginative, emotional, erotic expression of a nation."

Let us try to do the sums of this remarkably complex problem. Jacobo Timerman was not kidnapped because he was a Jew, or probably even because he was protesting the conduct of Argentina's security forces, but because his business partner was discovered to have intimate connections with one of the most important left-wing guerrilla organizations in the country. Although innocent, Timerman was treated with unspeakable cruelty for about six months, undergoing a process which was all the harsher because of the outspoken anti-Semitism of his captors. He was not, however, a great defender of liberal democratic values (who in Argentina in those days was?) and he was not brought to trial for that reason. Rather, Timerman was an exceptionally able political speculator who had played his game with remarkable agility until an accidental revelation pushed him off his balance and sent him into the maelstrom of terror and counter-terror which followed the death of Perón. His experiences in Argentine prisons reveal the mistreatment of Jewish prisoners because they are Jewish, but his book does not establish—not by ten country miles—that people are arrested because they are Jewish. No "final solution" is under way in Argentina.

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Now it would be unconscionable for this reason to minimize in any way the personal suffering which Timerman underwent. To any prisoner a place of detention is a totalitarian society by definition, and Timerman's more than most: in one of the very few moments of black humor in an otherwise uniformly depressing book, he describes the "national security school" in which inmates, guards, and orderlies all sat side-by-side, diligently pursuing the three R's of "anti-Communism." If for Timerman the difference between an authoritarian and totalitarian government was not immediately apparent, he can certainly be forgiven. Still and all, there was no show trial at which he confessed a guilt which was not his, and in the end he was in fact released.

Where does this leave the rest of us? Foreign-policy decisions are always exercises in choice, for Americans usually between unpalatable alternatives. It was precisely to assist in those difficult choices that Jeane Kirkpatrick tried to formulate in these pages (she did not and could not have "invented") the distinction between two completely different kinds of dictatorship.* The key to that difference was not how regimes treated their political prisoners, but where the boundaries of the jail were located. In societies like Cuba or the German Democratic Republic, the prison walls are virtually coterminous with the nation's geographical limits, and when a door is suddenly pushed ajar (as it was at the Peruvian embassy in Havana last year) countless thousands react precisely the way that convicts could be expected to respond in a similar situation—they stampede unceremoniously to freedom.

Countries like Argentina are different, and the difference begins with the fact that they have no "boat people." Whatever horrors occur in the places of confinement (and the proper response to these is neither complacency nor rationalization), in the very texture of life, wide areas of personal, spiritual, and political and economic freedom are allowed to persist and expand. It is unfortunate, to say the very least, to have to measure the "improvement" of human rights in that society (or any like it) by cataloguing the annually decreasing number of violations, but that diminishing statistic is still a sign of progress—and of hope. One longs for such auspicious auguries from societies which the liberal press thinks more worthy of our conciliatory efforts.

There will always be a difference of opinion over the most effective method of protesting cases such as Timerman's, but simply to label an authoritarian military regime as virtually indistinguishable from something it is not—namely, a totalitarian state along Nazi or Soviet lines—is to write off several thousand political prisoners, harden the determination of their captors to resist outside pressures on their behalf, and consign the resolution of matters to an eventuality which is not about to occur—a foreign invasion of Argentina to depose the existing authorities and open the jails.†

In an emotional outburst published in the *Times* (May 17, 1981) several days after his review of Timerman's book, Anthony Lewis returned to the subject by insisting that our relations with Argentina turned about the question of "our own soul." Are things at such a point, he asked, "that we Americans must enlist torturers and murderers as allies, and proclaim their values, their God, as ours?. . . What kind of country are we?" We are this kind of country: one that must balance our highest ideals against the world we find outside our borders, a world in which most other nations, including the sanctimonious Swedes and the hypocritical French, ask no questions as long as they can make a sale; a country which is locked in a struggle of incalculable consequence with a major world power that is also, as Anthony Lewis well knows, courting the same men he refers to as "torturers and murderers."

If the sole purpose of foreign policy were to make us feel good about ourselves, we could gladly concede the Soviets their Argentine prize; in practice, however, even Jimmy Carter concluded that this was a luxury we could not afford. If our Argentine options are both nearly (but not *precisely*) equally repugnant, the blame should be placed squarely upon the shoulders of those to whom it belongs—not our elected officials, but those Argentines ("alienated youth," "Third World" priests, leftist gangsters, and irresponsible politicians) who narrowed the range of possibilities by destroying their country's only civilian, democratic option (with all its warts) in nearly a generation, bringing to the surface a subcutaneous culture of police brutality and anti-Semitism which could well have remained where it was for an indefinite period.

That is the real significance of the Timerman case, and one can only hope that some day the point will be grasped as firmly in the editorial offices of Washington and New York as it already is in Buenos Aires.

*"Dictatorships & Double Standards," November 1979.

† In an op-ed page article endorsing Timerman's portrait of Argentina's rulers and calling the regime there "a new kind of totalitarianism," Robert Cox, editor-in-chief of the Buenos Aires *Herald*, actually goes on to describe something very nearly the opposite of totalitarian rule: "If labels must be applied, Argentina could best be described as feudalistic and anarchic. . . . The tragedy stems from the fact that central authority, and the responsibility that goes with it, has never been established by the moderates in the military. . ." (New York *Times*, June 9, 1981). Here then is yet another, if perhaps inadvertent, confirmation of the usefulness of the distinction.

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Hemingway's Private War

Kenneth S. Lynn

In the summer of 1924, Ernest Hemingway wrote to Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas to report on the progress he was making with a long short story in which he was "trying to do the country like Cézanne and having a hell of a time and sometimes getting it a little bit. It is about 100 pages long and nothing happens and the country is swell, I made it all up, so I see it all and part of it comes out the way it ought to, it is swell about the fish, but isn't writing a hard job though?" The story in question was "Big Two-Hearted River," which in addition to being swell about the fish and as visually powerful as a Cézanne landscape, turned out to be a nice little masterpiece of psychological indeterminacy.

As he walks into the Michigan woods, the solitary Nick Adams feels a sense of release. "He felt he had left everything behind, the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs. It was all back of him." Toward the end of the day, he pitches his tent and crawls inside, noting with pleasure how "homelike" the space seems. At last, he thinks, "he was settled. Nothing could touch him. It was a good place to camp. He was there, in the good place. He was in his home where he had made it."

From this point forward the story abounds in details of how splendid the fishing is and what a good time Nick is having. Yet some sort of problem is lurking on the margins of his mind. Thus while he is finishing his supper the first night, he suddenly becomes aware that his mind is "starting to work," but because he is tired he is able to "choke it." The next day his happiness is again interrupted. An arduous battle with the biggest trout Nick has ever seen ends with the trout's escape, and as the fisherman is reeling in his line he feels, vaguely, "a little sick." In the manipulative manner of a Watsonian behaviorist, he thereupon modifies his behavior so as to avoid the negative stimulus of a second defeat in one day. Instead of plunging into the armpit-deep water of a tree-filled swamp, wherein he might hook big trout in places impossible to land them, he decides to postpone the experience. "There were plenty of days coming when he could fish the swamp," he says to himself, as the story ends.

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What are the "other needs" Nick feels he has put behind him on entering the woods? Why does he call the tent his home? What is the thought that he manages to choke off? Why is he so upset by defeat? Hemingway does not explain any of these puzzles. The angler on the bank of the Big Two-Hearted River is clearly a man with a divided heart, but the unhappiness underlying his predominant happiness is never specified.

For a decade and a half after its appearance as the concluding episode of *In Our Time* (1925), "Big Two-Hearted River" was admired by literary critics for its ambiguities. Then in the late 1930's this situation changed, when Edmund Wilson took it upon himself to improve the story by making it more explicit. The experience that has given Nick Adams "a touch of panic," Wilson asserted in 1939, is "the wholesale shattering of human beings in which he has taken part." The statement had no basis in fact. For World War I is not mentioned in "Big Two-Hearted River," and there is no reference in the story to feelings of panic.

That Wilson nevertheless described Hemingway's hero as the psychological victim of a brutal war was a measure of the extent to which his literary sensibility was ruled by political nausea. In the early 30's, Wilson's nausea had led him to the Marxist faith, because Marxism called for the total rejection of the entire existing society. With visions of destruction dancing in his head, Wilson had dedicated himself to writing an ambitious book on European radical thought. *To the Finland Station* was completed in 1939, but by that time the author had come to the realization that the Marxist cure for social disease was no solution. The Bolsheviks, he admitted, had not erected a "classless society out of the old illiterate feudal Russia," but rather had "encouraged the rise and domination of a new controlling and privileged class, who were . . . exploiting the workers almost as callously as the Czarist industrialists had done."

The recognition of Stalin's reign of terror, however, did not reconcile Wilson to the imperfections of capitalism; it merely caused him to include the Soviet Union among the governments of the world that he despised. Turning away from the study of radical political thought, he reread Hemingway—and promptly found in "Big Two-Hearted River" the vision of a sensitive writer

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whose suffering has been caused not by mistakes he himself has made, but by the belligerency of great powers. The commentators have been wrong in accusing Hemingway of an indifference to society, Wilson proclaimed at the end of his essay, for in fact "his whole work is a criticism of society."

WHEN, in 1940, Malcolm Cowley finally ceased apologizing for Stalinism, he, too, began to cast about for non-Marxist modes of continuing his assault on the moral credentials of capitalist society. America's entrance into the war against Hitler made this problem particularly difficult for him, but Wilson's overinterpretation of Hemingway seems to have showed him how to solve it. In addition to shoveling much more war-victim material into "Big Two-Hearted River" than Wilson had done, Cowley's introduction to the *Viking Portable Hemingway* (1944) went on to insist that a haunted, hypnagogic quality characterizes all of Hemingway's work. His stories are told against the background of the countries he has seen, Cowley said, but

> these countries are presented in a strangely mortuary light. In no other writer of our time can you find such a profusion of corpses: dead women in the rain; dead soldiers bloated in their uniforms and surrounded by torn papers; sunken liners full of bodies that float past the closed portholes. In no other writer can you find so many suffering animals: mules with their forelegs broken drowning in shallow water off the quay at Smyrna; gored horses in the bull ring; wounded hyenas first snapping at their own entrails and then eating them with relish.

In a strangely mortuary light. To a critic who had argued all through the 1930's that the difference between the Soviet Union and other countries was the difference between life and death, it must have felt like vindication to write those words, and to append to them that long list of fearsome illustrations. For while history had revealed that the critic might have been a bit incautious in his praise of the Soviet Union, Hemingway's stories certainly seemed to confirm Cowley's judgment of the rest of the world.

Was it really accurate, though, to say that Hemingway had presented France, Spain, Switzerland, the United States, and the other countries he knew as a series of hypnagogic visions? Convincing proof of this bold proposition would have required a great many demonstrations across the whole range of his work. The *Viking Portable*'s editor, however, stuck to a strikingly limited number of stories; indeed, there was one story he kept coming back to again and again. In the end, all the credibility of his "nightmares at noonday" interpretation was invested in his comments on "Big Two-Hearted River."

Cowley's Nick Adams is in far worse psychological shape than Edmund Wilson's. The evidence of his condition is not to be found in the story, to be sure, but that was nothing to worry about because "Hemingway's stories are most of them continued," and in a somewhat later book than *In Our Time* there is a story called "Now I Lay Me" that "casts a retrospective light" on "Big Two-Hearted River." The later story is concerned with "an American volunteer in the Italian army who isn't named but who might easily be Nick Adams." (The critic is in error. The volunteer is named, and his name is Nick.) As a result of being wounded in action, the young man is afraid to go to sleep at night. "I had been living for a long time," he confesses, "with the knowledge that if I ever shut my eyes in the dark and let myself go, my soul would go out of my body." This confession, we are assured, enables us to appreciate the psychological fragility of the man who is fishing the Big Two-Hearted River.

Among the things Cowley neglects to tell us about "Now I Lay Me" is that the frightened American soldier is lying in a room a scant seven kilometers behind the lines. Moreover, the soldier knows that, as surely as autumn follows summer, he will have to return to the fighting—and in fact at the end of the story we learn of his later participation in the "October offensive." The story, in short, is very much like another Hemingway story called "In Another Country," in which a recuperating American soldier lies in bed at night in Milan, "afraid to die and wondering how I would be when I went back to the front again."

In "Big Two-Hearted River," we are in a very different world. Nick is a civilian, safely back in the United States. Now that he no longer has any worries about coming under fire again, has his psyche healed as rapidly as his body has, or is he still afraid to close his eyes at night, lest his soul take flight? Hemingway's answer is clear. "Nick lay down . . . under the blankets. He turned on his side and shut his eyes. He was sleepy. He felt sleep coming. He curled up under the blanket and went to sleep." So much for the retrospective light cast by "Now I Lay Me."

Cowley's essay on Hemingway is not a work that can bear careful scrutiny; it does not even give the correct year of Hemingway's birth. Yet no sooner was the essay published than it began to influence critics everywhere. A young man named Philip Young, for instance, "ported a *Portable Hemingway* . . . half way across Europe during World War II," and after the war he wrote a book that carried Cowley's critical extravagances to further heights of absurdity. The wound Hemingway suffered in World War I, Young contended, had so deeply traumatized him that he spent his entire life as a writer composing variations on the story of the psychically crippled "sick man" who fishes the Big Two-Hearted River. Alas, Young never thought to ask himself whether reading the *Viking Portable Hemingway* against the dramatic backdrop of World War II had not made it all too easy for

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him to believe in the obsessive importance to Hemingway of World War I. Nor did Young ever suspect that Cowley's conversion of a sun-drenched, Cézannesque picture of a predominantly happy fishing trip into a tale as spooky as any of Poe's or Hawthorne's was governed by an ideological purpose, which was to bathe American life in a strangely mortuary light.

Intellectual naiveté, however, was not the only reason Cowley's introduction slew the minds of so many critics. In the wake of the triumph of American power in World War II, the anti-American prejudice of intellectuals who automatically identified themselves with powerlessness became more virulent than ever before, and anti-American interpretations of American literature sprang up like poisonous weeds. In *Huckleberry Finn*, for instance, Huck's decision at the end of the book to cross over into the Oklahoma Territory for a few weeks of howling adventures with Tom Sawyer and Nigger Jim before returning to his home town in Missouri was transformed by post-World War II critics into a decision to secede forever from American society, because American society sickened the boy.

It was the critics, however, who were sickened by American society, not Huck Finn, and their endorsement of a war-wound interpretation of the life and work of Hemingway was a further reflection of their bias. Thus the late Mark Schorer, in an essay published in 1962, projected upon the author of "Big Two-Hearted River" his own sense of social victimization. On July 8, 1918, while on service with the Red Cross on the Italian front, Schorer wrote, Hemingway "was severely wounded by the explosion of a mortar shell and the next three months he spent in a hospital in Milan. Nothing more important than this wounding was ever to happen to him. A wound was to become the central symbol of nearly everything he was to write, and the consequences of a wound his persistent thematic preoccupation."

CARLOS BAKER had a golden opportunity to overturn the prevailing clichés when he undertook to write his massive *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (1969). But the weight of thirty years of accumulated critical authority was too much for Baker, and the opportunity was lost. Two events in recent months have now presented another opportunity. The first event was President Reagan's reminder to the nation in March that, despite the awful pain, human beings are sometimes able to respond to the experience of being wounded with an amazing gaiety. The second was the appearance in April of a totally unstructured, badly under-annotated, unhelpfully indexed, but marvelously rich trove of Hemingway letters,* which among other things reveals that the young man who was struck down on July 8, 1918 reacted to the event with humorous equivalents of his fellow Illinoisan's "Honey, I forgot to duck."

The youth's first letter to his family, written from the hospital in Milan on his nineteenth birthday, not quite two weeks after he was hit, was adorned with a reassuringly funny cartoon he had drawn of himself lying on his back, a heavily bandaged leg thrust straight out. The balloon coming out of this comic figure's mouth reads, "gimme a drink!" The text of the letter is equally high-spirited. "This is a peach of a hospital," he began. "Everything is fine," he continued, "and I'm very comfortable and one of the best surgeons in Milan is looking after my wounds." The wounds in his left leg were "healing finely"; the bullet in his right knee would be removed "by the time you get this letter."

A month later, he recounted to his family the whole story of how he had been "struck by a trench mortar and a machine gun while advancing toward the rear, as the Irish say." In spite of his wounds, he had carried an injured Italian soldier to a dugout, where "I kind of collapsed." When the ambulance finally came for Hemingway, he "ordered it down to the road to get the soldiers that had been wounded first." Back at the dressing station at last, the officers "gave me a shot of morphine and an anti-tetanus injection and shaved my legs and took out about Twenty 8 shell fragments. . . . They did a fine job of bandaging and all shook hands with me and would have kissed me but I kidded them along."

In mid-September, he announced to his father that "my legs are coming on wonderfully and will both eventually be O.K. absolutely," and on October 18 he finished off another health report to his family by declaring that "it does give you an awfully satisfactory feeling to be wounded."

Mixed in, though, with the enormous pleasure it gave him to know that he had behaved heroically and was healing splendidly were some chillier thoughts he was not talking about. A quarter of a century would pass before he would admit in a letter that in World War I he not only had been "really scared" when he was hit, but that in the ensuing months his continuing fear of death had prompted him to become "very devout." For like the wounded American soldiers in "Now I Lay Me" and "In Another Country," Hemingway knew that once he had recuperated he was slated to return to the front. On the eve of being discharged from the hospital, he sought to quiet his family's anxieties by saying that "it has been fairly conclusively proved that I can't be bumped off," but as he nervously chattered on about what a "very simple thing" it was to die, and about how preferable it was "to die in . . . the happy period of undisillusioned youth, to go out in a blaze of light, than to have your body worn out and old,"

* *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters, 1917-1961*, edited by Carlos Baker, Scribner's, 948 pp., $27.50.

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it became clear that, like Tom Sawyer, he was whistling to keep up his courage as he walked past the graveyard at midnight.

A day or so after rejoining his unit, Hemingway was felled by an attack of jaundice, and by the time he was healthy again the armistice had been signed. The knowledge that he was no longer in danger of being killed was immediately reflected in the tone and content of his letters. Self-deprecatory humor gave way to bragging, and an inadvertent revelation of deadly fear was replaced by an inadvertent revelation of how little he knew about liquor and women. "Lately I've been hitting it up," he boasted to his old friend Bill Smith in December, shortly before leaving Italy, "about *18 martinis a day.*" *The letter to Smith also* asserted that, in spite of the writer's "brutal" personality, a nurse he had met in the hospital had fallen madly in love with him and they were planning to get married and "have a wonderful time being poor together." This estimate of things was no more accurate than the report on his martini intake. Not long after his return to the States, the nurse sent him a "Dear Ernest" letter. Hemingway was so overcome with anger that he ran a fever and was obliged to take to his bed.

Between the time he arrived at his parents' home in Oak Park, Illinois, in January 1919, and his reembarkation for Europe in the late fall of 1921, the returned war veteran wrote many letters to many people. In none of them is there either an explicit or implicit indication of the sort of psychic malaise that literary criticism would subsequently assign to the autobiographical hero who fishes the Big Two-Hearted River. An emotion of startling intensity does surge to the surface of the correspondence in the middle of these postwar years, but the name of that emotion is not panic, or hypnagogic horror, or anything like. It is anger, an all-consuming anger, of the sort he manifested when he was jilted by the nurse. And what would trigger it would be a contest of wills with his mother.

GRACE HALL HEMINGWAY was an ardent Congregationalist, a frustrated opera singer, and the dominant personality in the Hemingway household. While her doctor husband resented his wife's bossiness, he fully shared her moral values, and as a parent was a considerably stricter disciplinarian. Where Grace occasionally used a hair brush on an erring child, Ed Hemingway was quick to employ a razor strop. Conflict between the parents and Ernest, their headstrong second child (but first son), thus became inevitable, even though the boy worshipped his father for his knowledge of nature and his extraordinary prowess as a hunter and fisherman. According to Carlos Baker's biography, young Ernest sometimes became so angered by the punishments meted out to him by his father that he would sit in the open door of a shed behind their house drawing beads on his father's head with a shotgun, as Dr. Hemingway worked among his tomato vines.

But the struggle with his mother was finally much more bitter. In the opening pages of the new edition of the letters, we pick up the struggle at the point at which she was attempting to maintain control of her son's life even though he had left home and taken a job with the Kansas City *Star*. It was an attempt which in some ways the eighteen-year-old Hemingway welcomed. Thus he was very grateful for the food she regularly prepared and sent to him. "The box came tonight and we just opened it at the Press room," he informed her on March 2, 1918. With the help of some friends he had polished off the cake right *there in the office. "Mother Hemingstein," he said,* using one of his two favorite nicknames for her (the other was, more simply, "Mrs. Stein"), you are "some cook."

Yet if he was glad to reap the rewards of his continuing dependency, he refused to be bound by its obligations. As he would with all the women he would marry, the young Hemingway wanted to eat his cake and have it too. When his mother remonstrated with him for not attending church, he replied with a patently hypocritical excuse. "The reason I don't go to church on Sunday is because always I have to work till 1 a.m. getting out the Sunday *Star* . . . and I never open my eyes Sunday morning until 12:30 noon." Modulating into outright lying, he added, "so you see it isn't because I don't want to. You know I don't rave about religion but am as sincere a Christian as I can be."

The war hero who came back to Oak Park in January 1919 felt it necessary to conceal from his parents not only that he had learned to smoke and drink, but that he had no intention of remaining for long in the United States. To one of his army buddies he revealed that he was keeping a bottle of booze in a "camouflaged bookcase in my room"; to another he grumbled that "My Family . . . are wolfing at me to go to college. They want me to settle down for a while and the place that they are pulling for is Wisconsin." Toward the end of the summer of 1919, he briefly escaped the constraints on his freedom by going on a fishing trip with two friends to the Big Fox and Little Fox Rivers in the northern peninsula of Michigan. Below an old dam, Hemingway hooked the "biggest trout I've ever seen," only to lose it after a long effort. Nevertheless, the fishing had been "priceless."

ON HIS return home, the fisherman and his mother inexorably moved toward a confrontation, and in the summer of 1920, shortly after his twenty-first birthday, it occurred. One moonlit night at the Hemingways' summer place in Michigan, Ernest and some other young people in the neighborhood sneaked out after midnight and held a party on a sandbar that went on until 3 A.M. When the deception was discovered, the mother of one of girls blamed Ernest, be-

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cause he was older, and thereafter refused to speak to him. Mrs. Hemingway punished her son by coldly ordering him out of the house. In reprisal, Hemingway refused to communicate with either of his parents and left their letters to him unopened. "Am so darn disgusted," he wrote to his fifteen-year-old friend Grace Quinlan, "I don't care to have anything more to do with them for a year at least." In the first of a series of cruelly unfair allegations, Hemingway also told Grace Quinlan that his mother had been "glad of an excuse to oust me," because she had "more or less hated me" ever since he had told her—or so he claimed—that she was spending money on herself that should have been reserved for the younger Hemingway children in college.

By the fall of 1920, he was once again in touch with his father, but not with his mother. In an effort to comfort his wife, Dr. Hemingway wrote her a letter—the text is in Carlos Baker's biography—which left no doubt where his sympathies lay. "Ernest's last letter to me," he told her, "was written in anger and filled with expressions that were untrue to a gentleman and a son who has had everything done for him. . . . He must get busy and make his own way, and suffering alone will be the means of softening his Iron Heart of selfishness."

Eventually, a reconciliation took place. The senior Hemingways were present at Ernest's marriage to Hadley Richardson in September 1921, and they did not protest the decision of the bride and groom to make their home in Paris. Yet for all the polite gestures back and forth, Hemingway was never able to come to terms with his mother. As reviews of it have suggested, the new edition of his letters outrivals in vehemence even the collected eruptions of Mark Twain. Hemingway in the course of his life was angry at politicians, churchmen, fellow writers, literary critics, and assorted sports figures. But above all, he was angry at his mother. Not until his suicide—that act of supreme anger—would his epistolary abuse of her cease.

Upon learning from her in 1926 that she considered *The Sun Also Rises* to be a filthy book, he was so furious that for a time he could not reply. "I did not answer when you wrote about the Sun etc. book," he finally explained to her on February 5, 1927, "as I could not help being angry and it is very foolish to write angry letters; and more than foolish to do so to one's mother. It is quite natural for you not to like the book and I regret your reading any book that causes you pain or disgust." Of course the book is unpleasant, he conceded with seeming good temper, as he prepared to counterattack, "but it is not *all* unpleasant and I am sure is no more unpleasant than the real inner lives of some of our best Oak Park families. You must remember that in such a book all the worst of the people's lives is displayed while at home there is a very lovely side for the public and the sort of thing of which I have had some experience in observing behind closed doors."

At times, his astonishing vulnerability to his mother's moral judgments caused him to respond not with insults, but with flights of self-justification and prevarication, as in his adolescent letters from Kansas City. On the day, for instance, when he sought to explain to his parents why he had divorced Hadley and married Pauline Pfeiffer, he began by apologizing to them for having caused them "so much shame and suffering," and then went on to declare, in a flagrant departure from the truth, that although he had been in love with both women for over a year, he had been "absolutely faithful to Hadley." Moreover, he claimed, he had been leading a very clean life in other respects. "I remember Mother saying once that she would rather see me in my grave than something —I forget what—smoking cigarettes perhaps. If it's of any interest I don't smoke. Haven't for almost 3 years altho you probably will hear stories that I smoke like a furnace." As for the nature of his fiction, he admitted that while he was "upset about Mother accusing me of pandering to the lowest tastes," his conscience was clear. "I *know* that I am not disgracing you in my writing but rather doing something that some day you will be proud of." You cannot know, he cried out, his voice rising in anguish, "how it makes me feel for Mother to be ashamed of what I know as sure as you know that there is a God in heaven is *not to be ashamed of*."

A year after receiving that letter, Dr. Hemingway committed suicide by shooting himself in the head. Angina pectoris, diabetes, and the inability to sleep because of pain were the reasons behind the tragedy, according to the letter that Hemingway dispatched to his editor, Maxwell Perkins. Physiological explanations, however, did not satisfy the letter writer for long. Whether because there simply was no limit to his desire to degrade his mother, or because he was trying to cover up his own guilty sense of having caused his father a great deal of unhappiness, Hemingway soon persuaded himself that a hen-pecking wife had "forced my father to suicide." Thenceforward he was wont to refer to her in his correspondence as "my bitch of a mother." He refused to invite her to visit him at his home in Cuba, and he would not go to Oak Park, because "I can't stand to see her." Even after her death in 1951, he continued to rail at her as a husband killer.

RIGHT from the start of his career as a creative writer, Hemingway also sought to pursue his war with his mother by fictional means. From the vantage point of Paris's Left Bank in 1924, he looked back upon Oak Park in anger, as he worked upon the stories that became the book called *In Our Time*. "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," the second of the stories in the book, presents a sanctimonious wife, her hen-pecked husband, and their little boy. Instead of obeying his mother's request that he come up to

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the bedroom where she is lying with the blinds drawn and a Bible beside her, the boy goes off for a walk in the woods with his father. In "Soldier's Home," the seventh story, we meet a mother who willingly cooks breakfast for her war-veteran son, but who doesn't allow him to "muss up" the morning newspaper—it is the Kansas City *Star*, we learn—which he wants to read while eating. She then completes the young man's annoyance by asking him if he loves her, to which he replies, "I don't love anybody," and by urging him to kneel and pray with her, to which he replies, "I can't." In both of these stories, the need to comply with a mother's demands is defied by a rebellious son. The final story in *In Our Time*, as we have seen, centers on a fisherman who feels, as he enters the woods, that he has left everything behind, "the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs." Whether the "other needs" he has escaped include the need to please his mother is never made clear.

Yet if the fisherman's dark thoughts in "Big Two-Hearted River" are choked off before they reach the level of consciousness, Grace Hall Hemingway was surely on the storyteller's mind. The satisfaction Nick takes in referring to his tent as his home, for instance, derives from the author's inability either to forget or to forgive his mother's banishment of him four years before from their home in Michigan. As Nick sets up the tent, he is defiantly establishing a counter-domicile—and as he proceeds to hang his pack from a nail that he has "gently" driven into a pine tree, to prepare a delicious meal of beans and spaghetti, to brew his coffee by a carefully described method, and to clean up after himself with scrupulous thoroughness, he is defining a counter-domesticity. Hemingway may have rebelled against the values of his mother and father, but he was also marked by them; in the woods, Nick Adams apes the cooking skills and the careful housekeeping habits that Hemingway had observed in his father on fishing and hunting trips and in his mother at home.

Happiness for the hero of "Big Two-Hearted River" is an inordinate concern with small details. On the one hand, his obsessiveness keeps dark thoughts at bay; on the other hand, it demonstrates how responsible he is. Before reaching down into the stream to touch a trout resting on the bottom, Nick conscientiously wets his hand, "so that he would not disturb the delicate mucus that covered him. If a trout was touched with a dry hand, a white fungus attacked the unprotected spot." The author who would cry out to his mother that his work was nothing to be ashamed of, and that the day would come when she would be proud of him, could not have continued writing if he had not believed himself to be, in his own way, a moralist. He had incorporated into himself too much of her personality to have embraced the nihilism with which his interpreters have been so eager to associate him.

The question of why the author elected not to specify the nature of the malaise that underlies Nick's happiness in "Big Two-Hearted River" can never be answered with certainty. But the most plausible answer is that, unlike "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" and "Soldier's Home," in which sons are clearly unhappy in the homes of their mothers, "Big Two-Hearted River" takes place in the woods. If Nick Adams had been revealed as a man so angry at his mother that he could not even forget her when he was off on a fishing trip, readers might simply have concluded that Nick was an emotional adolescent. The only way to avoid such a judgment would have been to show Nick using his time in the woods to sort out his feelings about his mother and come to an understanding of the tension between them. Writing that kind of story, however, would have required of Hemingway a degree of self-understanding that he would never achieve.

"I had a wonderful novel to write about Oak Park," he told the literary critic Charles Fenton in 1952, but "would never do it because I did not want to hurt liveing [*sic*] people." The excuse rings false. Neither as a man nor as a writer had Hemingway ever hesitated to hurt living people, and furthermore both of his parents were dead when he wrote to Fenton. If pangs of conscience had previously stayed his hand, why did he not write the Oak Park novel at some point during the ten years of life that remained to him after his mother's death in 1951? Clearly, it was not a concern for protecting his parents that forever prevented him from writing the book, but rather his own failure to master its materials. A novel-length exploration of the experience of growing up in Oak Park would have led Hemingway into a swamp filled with deep water and overgrown with trees, in which big trout might be hooked but not landed.

Having failed to work out his relationship with his mother, Hemingway went on to marriages that mostly did not work, and to fictional commentaries upon them that are either as brutally direct as "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" and "Soldier's Home" are about his mother, or as brilliantly evasive as "Big Two-Hearted River." Three of his four marriages were important to him personally, the first, the second, and the fourth, but in terms of their fictional consequences, the first was by far the most significant.

Hadley Richardson was eight years older than Hemingway. She was raised in a roomy, comfortable house in the suburban West End of St. Louis, where the oak trees and fine lawns recalled Oak Park's. Her mother's overriding interest was in varieties of religious experience, from theosophy to mental science to psychic phenomena. "A woman of strong personality and convictions," says Hadley's biographer, Alice Hunt Sokoloff, "she was the dominant influence in the Richardson family." Mr. Richardson ran a pharmaceutical business

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and was a heavy drinker, a habit of which his wife severely disapproved, and when Hadley was twelve years old, he committed suicide. The similarities in their backgrounds helped to make Ernest and Hadley feel that they belonged together, and so did their dreams of escape. When Hadley wrote to Ernest during their engagement that "The world's a jail and we're going to break it together," she knew she spoke for him as well as for herself.

"She's a wonderful tennis player, best pianist I ever heard and a sort of terribly fine article," Hemingway wrote to Grace Quinlan in the summer of 1921, a month and a half before he and Hadley were married. Under his tutelage, Hadley also learned to fish as well as he could, and in the first two years of their marriage she kept right up with him as he walked over the St. Bernard pass into Italy, played tennis at Rapallo, hiked through the Black Forest, spent three months skiing in Switzerland, handicapped the horses at San Siro and Auteuil, went to all the bullfights at Pamplona, and dined out every night in Milan at the Cova or Campari's. Despite the considerable difference in their ages—which for unstated psychological reasons must have played its part, too, in his attraction to her—Hadley was wonderfully youthful, a gutsy companion, a perfect pal.

In August 1923, the endless honeymoon abruptly came to an end, as the Hemingways left Paris for Toronto. Hadley was pregnant, and they both wanted the baby to be born in a hospital on North American soil. (In Europe, it was still not the general practice to give anesthetics to women in labor.) On September 10, Hemingway reported for work at the Toronto *Daily Star*. He expected to be kept on local assignments, but was told he might be sent out of town as well. A month later, he was in New York, covering the arrival of the British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, when the news reached him that Hadley had gone into the hospital. The long train ride back to Toronto gave him ample time to worry about all sorts of things. Upon reaching the hospital the next morning, he looked broken down "from fatigue and strain," as Hadley subsequently described him to Isabel Simmons, an old friend of Ernest's from Oak Park.

By the end of January 1924, the Hemingways were back in Paris, where because of Bumby, their baby boy, they now settled in a somewhat larger apartment than they had previously occupied. Soon, Hemingway's letters to his friends were bubbling with descriptions of where he and Hadley had just been and of where they were planning to go next. "We have more fun together all the time," he wrote to Howell Jenkins. "She is the best guy on a trip you ever saw. She is keeping her piano up and runs the house and the baby damned smooth and is always ready to go out and eat oysters at the café and drink a bottle of Pouilly before supper." The endless honeymoon had seemingly resumed—except that it hadn't. "It is just about morning," Hemingway wrote to the publisher Robert McAlmon in the pre-dawn darkness of November 15, 1924, "Bumby had a night when he didn't sleep and Hadley and I've been up with him alternatively and together." Baby-sitter problems forced them to come home in the evening before Hemingway was ready to do so, and when they left Bumby with a sitter and went to the six-day bike races at the Vélodrome d'Hiver, Hadley's energies would give out in the hours after midnight, forcing her to curl up on the bench and nap, as her indefatigable husband went on cheering the riders.

In his immaturity, Hemingway was no more ready to accept the restrictions on his freedom that fatherhood had imposed than he had been to live by the rules of conduct laid down by his mother. The letters he sent to friends during 1924 had only praise for lovely, gallant Hadley, but in several of the stories he wrote for *In Our Time*, he revealed how deeply conflicted his feelings about her had become.

Of the six stories in the collection that reflect one facet or another of the author's angry, guilty, depressed state of mind, the most blatantly autobiographical is "Cross Country Snow." Nick Adams and his friend George are having such fun skiing by themselves in Switzerland that they both wish they could go on sampling the slopes indefinitely and "not give a damn" about anything else. Nick, though, is married to Helen, and Helen is going to have a baby. "Will you go back to the States?" George inquires. "I guess so," Nick replies. "Do you want to?" George asks. "No," says Nick.

In "Cat in the Rain" and "Out of Season," the author extended his examination of the problems of young American couples in postwar Europe. But in the other three stories about Hadley and himself, Hemingway projected his sense of foreboding backward in time, into stories of boyhood in Michigan before the war. He wrote "The Three-Day Blow," he later recalled in his memoir of the 20's, *A Moveable Feast*, while sitting in a café on the Place St.-Michel on "a wild, cold, blowing day," and so he made it "that sort of day in the story." A marital weather as well got into the story, and into "Indian Camp" and "The End of Something."

Carlos Baker's biography tells us that Hemingway once knew a girl from Petoskey, Michigan, named Marjorie Bump, and that he "romanticized their friendship" in "The End of Something." Nick's girlfriend in the story is, to be sure, named Marjorie, but the fact that she fishes as well as he can, is very much of a pal to Nick, and yet is deeply in love with him, strongly suggests she is Hadley. Furthermore, the story does not "romanticize" Nick's friendship with Marjorie, it portrays the swift and ruthless destruction of their relationship. For Hemingway was testing out, through the

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composition of "The End of Something," the idea of divorce. In the mid-1930's he would do the same thing in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" by presenting his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, transparently disguised as the rich-bitch spouse of a dying writer, even though at the time of writing the story Hemingway was assuring such correspondents as Maxwell Perkins that "Pauline is fine," just as he had written only sweet words about Hadley in his correspondence of 1924.

As Hemingway conjured up Nick and Marjorie building a fire on a sandy point and watching it get dark, he was rehearsing a scene he would shortly play in his own life. "There's going to be a moon tonight," Nick says. "I know it," Marjorie replies happily. Without warning, Nick turns on her. "You know everything," he says sarcastically. "I've taught you everything," he goes on angrily, "and now it isn't fun any more." Stunned, Marjorie asks, "Isn't love any fun?" "No," says Nick, his head in his hands. The feeling of emptiness that one can sense in Nick's laconic answers to George in "Cross Country Snow" is again evident in the wake of his anger at the end of "The End of Something."

The mood of depression in the follow-up story, in which Nick and his friend Bill get drunk on a cold and blowy afternoon and talk about Marjorie, is considerably deeper. If you hadn't broken off with Marge, Bill says, "you'd be back home working trying to get enough money to get married." Nick says nothing, so Bill resumes his effort to comfort him. "Once a man's married he's absolutely bitched. . . . He hasn't got anything more. Nothing. Not a damn thing. He's done for." Once again, Nick says nothing. Depression has reduced him from laconicisms to silence.

And sometimes silence is the prelude to suicide, as "Indian Camp" demonstrates. Through the wide eyes of a very young Nick Adams, we watch his doctor father enter an Indian shanty one night and perform a Caesarean section on a young woman, using a jackknife to make the incision and a tapered gut leader from a fishing kit to sew it up. Only after the operation has been successfully concluded does Dr. Adams discover that the woman's seemingly stoic husband, unable to bear his wife's screams, has slit his throat while lying in the upper bunk.

For years, incautious critics claimed that "Indian Camp" was based on the author's memory of an incident he had witnessed as a little boy. Thanks to Carlos Baker, the claim no longer has any credibility. Yet Baker's own belief that the "melodramatic circumstances" of the story were entirely an "invention" is equally misleading. Behind the grisly tale lay the circumstance of Hemingway's anxiety-ridden train trip back to Toronto on the night Hadley went into labor. Did Hemingway, on that long night, out of a fear of being entrapped once again in family life, consider deserting his wife? Out of a sense of guilt at being absent from Hadley's side to help her through an ordeal which he himself had caused, did the train rider contemplate suicide? All we know is that he arrived at the hospital looking broken down with strain and fatigue. Yet eventually he did desert his wife and, as the new edition of his letters shows, by the time that "Indian Camp" and the rest of the *In Our Time* stories were published in October 1925, the author was openly talking of killing himself. "Indian Camp" is even more eerily predictive than "The End of Something."

Like Hemingway on the train, who in his imagination could see his wife in the hospital even though he was hundreds of miles away from her, the Indian husband is there in the room, listening to the screams, yet is so unconnected to what is going on that it is as if he were somewhere else. He does not speak to his wife, he does nothing to assist the doctor, he displays no interest in watching the birth of his son. Instead, he lies silently on his bunk, smoking a pipe, and then rolls toward the wall. Why his will to live has been overmastered remains mysterious. Throughout the story he has said not a word, and Nick Adams is so young that his father has to reply to the boy's question about the tragedy on a very simple level. "Why did he kill himself, Daddy?" "I don't know, Nick. He couldn't stand things, I guess." Reading that exchange, one feels that the author has brilliantly finessed a situation which virtually demanded perceptive comment because he was at a loss to explain his own vulnerability to thoughts of self-destruction. If Nick had been sixteen or seventeen years old, he and his father conceivably could have had a probing discussion of why a man might be moved to kill himself on the night he became a father; by making Nick a young boy, the author precluded the possibility.

"Perfectly calmly and not bluffingly," so he later reminded Pauline Pfeiffer, Hemingway announced in the fall of 1925 that if his emotional split between Pauline and Hadley "wasn't cleared up by christmas I would kill myself." His flight from family life had led him into a love affair that had become more serious than he had bargained on.

If the recollections of the dying writer in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" may be trusted as autobiographical confession, Hemingway was already consorting with other women as early as the fall of 1922, barely more than a year after his wedding to Hadley. "To me," he confessed to F. Scott Fitzgerald on July 1, 1925, "heaven would be . . . two lovely houses in town; one where I would have my wife and children and be monogamous and love them truly and well and the other where I would have my nine beautiful mistresses on 9 different floors." Not too many weeks after writing that letter, Hemingway sent Hadley and Pauline off to the Loire Valley together so that he could finish the first draft of *The Sun Also Rises* at full throttle. "I did not want to lose my speed making

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love," he explained a quarter of a century later to the art historian Bernard Berenson. But after the manuscript was completed, he told Berenson, he felt "hollow and lonely and needed a girl very badly. So I was in bed with a no good girl when my wife came home and had to get the girl out onto the roof . . . and change the sheets and come down to open the door." Having fornicated into a "state of absolute clear-headed-ness," he then went off with Hadley and Bumby to Schruns in the Vorarlberg, where they had "a wonderful, healthy, happy life," and he twice rewrote his novel. Pauline joined them at Christmas.

All very jolly, except that the hollow feeling he referred to in the letter to Berenson was depression. In the fall, he had threatened to kill himself if his love life were not cleared up by Christmas, but by then it was more agonizing than ever. A Christmas eve note to Scott Fitzgerald spoke of nights of sleeplessness and of all the "sons of bitching things I've done," and in yet another letter to Fitzgerald he admitted that he had been "in hell" since Christmas, "with plenty of insomnia to light the way around so I could study the terrain." Ever since he had met Hadley, he had regarded her as "the best and truest and loveliest person that I have ever known." He could not have written *In Our Time*, *The Torrents of Spring*, and *The Sun Also Rises* if he had not had her "loyal and self-sacrificing and always stimulating and loving . . . support," as well as the financial backing of her small inheritance. Bumby, he exclaimed, was so lucky to have her as a mother. Yet he was sexually enchanted and intellectually beguiled by Pauline. Besides being four years younger than Hadley, she was handsomer, wealthier, better dressed, and far more willing to cater to Hemingway's dependency on female flattery. Most people, including Hadley, were embarrassed by Hemingway's vicious parody of Sherwood Anderson in *The Torrents of Spring*, but Pauline predictably adored it. The writer who put his new novel through two more drafts at Schruns was a man torn in half between wife and mistress.

JAKE BARNES, the hero of *The Sun Also Rises*, has always been the prize exhibit of the war-victim interpretation of Hemingway. For Jake is sexually impotent as a result of a wound received in World War I, and he has trouble sleeping at night. But Jake's wound is not only the thematic preoccupation of the novelist, as Mark Schorer would have it; it is also a cover-up for artistic failure, a simplistic and sensationalistic means of accounting for the hero's depressed condition. Jake's insomnia, the new edition of Hemingway's letters makes clear, was inspired by the sleeplessness of a married man at Schruns, and Jake's inability to make love to the woman he is in love with was inspired by Hemingway's inability to find sexual contentment in the arms of the "best and truest and loveliest person" he had ever known. In *The Sun Also Rises*, the author let a war wound stand for a more subtle and complicated disability which he was afraid to deal with directly.

But if Hemingway is the impotent Jake, who is the nymphomaniacal Lady Brett Ashley? This compulsive creature, who claims to be deeply in love with Jake, has generally been identified by the critics as the fictional counterpart of Lady Duff Twysden, whom Hemingway had sometimes encountered in the bars of Montparnasse (and may, just possibly, have bedded). Yet while Lady Brett's boyish hairdo and clipped-speech mannerisms were in all likelihood modeled on Lady Duff's, the real-life lady's sexual liberation fell considerably short of the fictional lady's insatiability.

In her raging need to fornicate, Lady Brett is Hemingway himself, as the novelist came close to acknowledging in a letter to the poet Archibald MacLeish in 1943. Each of his novels, he told MacLeish, contained one new thing he had personally learned in the course of his life, and the realization that *The Sun Also Rises* had been based on was, "Promiscuity no solution." To the considerable distress of the poet Allen Tate, who reviewed *The Sun Also Rises* in the *Nation* in 1926, the novel not only makes its wayward heroine an attractive person, it condones her incontinent behavior. The letter to MacLeish explains why. Hemingway never thought of not condoning Lady Brett's sexual self-indulgence because he never thought of not condoning his own. Hemingway's only objection to promiscuity was that it had led him into hell, not heaven. Instead of solving his emotional problems, it had multiplied them.

Hemingway has not rounded out his people, Allen Tate further complained in his review, he has created caricatures based on one or two traits; his vision of character is "singularly oblique." Singularly oblique indeed. The novelist had based both the principal female character and the principal male character on aspects of himself and had then depicted these representatives of his divided self as being desperately in love with one another. In the back seats of taxicabs, they hold hands and kiss and exchange endearments. Kinkiness, though, was utterly foreign to the spirit of Hemingway, in Hemingway's opinion. Never in my life have I "felt a 'malajust'," he boasted to a friend in 1932. Kinkiness was a disease that afflicted only other writers, like F. Scott Fitzgerald, who was eternally worried, Hemingway jeered, about the size of his penis, or Gertrude Stein, who was a queer. Stein in particular became an object of his derision and contempt, for in addition to being a lesbian, she was a Jew. But Stein's worst sin of all in the eyes of the author of *The Sun Also Rises* was that although he had thought of her as a mother he could count on, she had failed to give him her unstinting approval.

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"MRS. STEIN" was one of his nicknames for his real mother. No sooner had he fled from her authority to Paris than he placed himself under the wing of Miss Stein, at 27 rue de Fleurus. At first, it was marvelous. She gave him the "run of the house." She encouraged him in his writing. And when he eventually asked her to become Bumby's godmother, she agreed. Yet if he basked in her love and understanding, this enormously gifted, deeply damaged man was no more able to tolerate her authoritarianism than he had been his mother's. An exasperated remark she made about the irresponsibility of the generation to which Hemingway belonged may very well have marked the moment at which his increasing irritation with her began to fester into an uglier feeling. For in front of the text of *The Sun Also Rises* he placed her remark about his generation being lost in juxtaposition with a quotation from Ecclesiastes to the effect that one generation passeth and another cometh, but the earth abideth forever —and the juxtaposition was no more intended as a compliment to his surrogate mother than the ensuing novel was intended as a bow to the literary taste of his real mother.

To Maxwell Perkins in 1926, he confessed that while he himself did not think "a hell of a lot" of his generation, he had resented Gertrude Stein's "bombast." "Nobody knows about the generation that follows them and certainly has no right to judge." In 1932, he told another friend that the purpose of the two quotations had been "to show the superiority of the earlier Hebrew writers over the later." In 1934, his accumulating anger finally exploded into hatred. Gertrude Stein "was a damned pleasant woman," he wrote to Arnold Gingrich of *Esquire,*

> before she had the menopause and it goes against my digestion to take shots at anyone who's ever been a friend no matter how lousey [*sic*] they get to be finally. Besides, I've got the gun and it's loaded and I know where the vital spots are and friendship aside there's a certain damned fine feeling of superiority in knowing you can finish anybody off whenever you want to and still not doing it.

The words seethe with the primitive rage of the child who drew beads on his father's head with a shotgun.

After she and Ernest had come to a parting of the ways, Hadley insisted that he and Pauline also part; if, after a considerable number of months had passed, they still found that they loved one another, Hadley would agree to a divorce. Hemingway's letters to Pauline during the period of their separation are filled with allusions to "horrors at night" and to "black depression." When two people love one another terribly much and then go away from each other, he told her, "it works almost as bad as abortion." All you can do is lie awake at night and "pray and pray and pray you won't go crazy."

Yet within a few weeks of his marriage to Pauline on May 10, 1927, the presumably happy bridegroom wrote "Hills Like White Elephants," an emotionally urgent story in which a man like Hemingway pleads with a woman like Hadley that if only she will consent to an abortion, "We can have everything. . . . We can have the whole world." And three months later, the bridegroom wrote to his father and admitted that "After we were divorced if Hadley would have wanted me I would have gone back to her." Another era, in short, had begun in Hemingway's life and work, in which fantasies of what-might-have-been would loom very large.

ACROSS the entire length of his adult life, Hemingway kept a double record of his feelings by writing stories and by writing letters. In contrast to the appalling frankness of the letters, the stories suppress information, conflate memories, play tricks with time-frames, speak in symbols. But with the help of the letters, they can be decoded and, at long last, properly understood. In the light of this understanding, the interpretation of Hemingway's fiction that originated forty years ago in Edmund Wilson's misreading of "Big Two-Hearted River," and that was then magnified by Malcolm Cowley into a misreading of the entire *oeuvre*, can also be recognized for what it really is: the exploitation of an author's work for ideological purposes.

Taken together, the letters and the stories show that what happened to Hemingway on July 8, 1918, did not give him nightmares for the rest of his life. If World War I played hob with his future, it was not because of a wound but because it suddenly propelled a rebellious youth who was barely out of high school into a very much bigger and more exciting world than the one he was slowly getting to know as a newspaperman in Kansas City.

Perhaps his separation from his mother and the values she stood for could never have been accomplished in the spirit of mutual understanding and love that Sherwood Anderson describes so delicately in his account of the relationship between young George Willard and his mother in *Winesburg, Ohio.* Perhaps, like figures in an O'Neill tragedy, Hemingway and his mother were doomed to claw and slash at one another, no matter what. The high-gear acceleration in his development that resulted from the war, however, certainly did not enhance the chances of establishing peace on the home front. Hemingway came back to Oak Park in 1919 spoiling for a fight, and his mother was waiting for him.

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Thinking About Terrorism

James Q. Wilson

For a decade or more, the United States government, like the governments of most Western powers, was largely silent on the question of Soviet complicity in international terrorism. German and Italian officials preferred to change the subject; the Central Intelligence Agency denied that Italy's Red Brigades had any foreign ties. When terrorism was discussed at all, it was to deplore the violence, to observe that no political faction had a monopoly on such tactics, and to urge that the underlying social causes of this "unrest" be removed and that the political "issues" be brought to the conference table.

Beginning in about 1979, and culminating in 1981 with the publication of Claire Sterling's book, *The Terror Network*,* the evidence that the Soviet Union had provided, at a minimum, substantial supplies of arms and training facilities to a broad spectrum of terrorist organizations became so compelling that it was difficult (though, as we shall see, not impossible) to deny it. A new administration came to power and announced that it was going to take terrorism seriously; Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig, Jr., accused the Soviet Union of "training, funding, and equipping" international terrorists. A Senate subcommittee began hearings on terrorism.

One might suppose that this change in mood would have encouraged investigative journalists to pursue with full vigor the tantalizing leads they had so long ignored. Court transcripts, newspaper interviews, police records in a half-dozen nations, the published biographies of admitted terrorists, the testimony of various defectors—all were available in great abundance. If so many sources had been available at the time of Watergate, we would never have heard of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein because the story would have been pieced together, in about a week and a half, by some stringer for the Associated Press.

But the reaction of our leading newspaper, the New York *Times*, has been quite the opposite. Philip Taubman, in a front-page story on May 3, criticized Haig for "not defining terrorism" and for not offering any evidence of a Soviet connection. Taubman noted that the Central Intelligence Agency, when asked by Director William J. Casey for a review of what we know about terrorism, was unable, in its first attempt, to provide evidence that would support the Haig charge. Taubman laced his story with quotations from various scholars criticizing Haig for "overstating" his case.

On May 5, Tom Wicker wrote a column in which he suggested that the Senate hearings on terrorism, chaired by Senator Jeremiah Denton of Alabama, gave him a "queasy feeling" because they brought to mind the Joseph McCarthy era of the 1950's. Congressman Don Edwards (D, California) wrote to the *Wall Street Journal* on April 20 to complain of its favorable review of the Sterling book and to object to the Reagan administration's policy as simplistic, one-sided, and neglectful of the "indigenous economic, religious, political, and historical tensions of the victimized society." We should not forget, he added, Soviet charges of American sponsorship of right-wing terrorism in Chile, El Salvador, Korea, and Israel. Terrorism will end when the "political situation" is settled in places such as Northern Ireland, the Middle East, and Puerto Rico.

But these were the moderate reactions to Sterling. Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, writing in the *Village Voice*, set the tone for the serious assault on her by referring to the "calculated misrepresentations of reality" she and others had produced. Sterling was described as one of the "notorious exponents" of the problem of " 'terrorism.' " Note the use of quotation marks: Cockburn and Ridgeway, like many other writers on the Left, regularly refer to "terrorism," never simply to terrorism. The intent, apparently, is to suggest that terrorism does not really exist, or exists in forms other than those implied by Sterling, or is a code-word employed by Sterling to suggest something else. I readily grant the difficulty of defining the term and of sorting out the various ways in which terrorism may be practiced—by the Right as well as the Left, by governments as well as conspirators—but it is hard to understand why anyone should imply that terrorist acts ought to

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be called something else when *terrorists themselves* regularly call their own actions terrorism and write about the virtues of terror. Let us quote from the widely circulated underground textbook of terrorists—the *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla,* by Carlos Marighella: "Terrorism is an arm the revolutionary can never relinquish."

The most remarkable review, however, was supplied by Aryeh Neier in the *Nation* (Neier is former executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union). He rejects the central argument of the Sterling book—namely, that the Soviet Union has been deeply implicated in terrorist activities—by claiming that she "shows nothing" to support the charge except "vapors." As I hope to make clear, this claim is so utterly at odds with the facts that Neier's review can only be described as a piece of systematic misrepresentation. Instead of taking up the factual assertions Sterling supplies and either criticizing the evidence behind them or supplying alternative interpretations of that evidence, Neier resorts to a set of debater's tricks that will deceive only somebody who has not read the book and who wants desperately to believe it is false. He accuses Sterling of bad writing, and supports this by listing thirty-nine adjectives she employs that he finds objectionable. (For the curious, Neier does not think it proper to refer to a villa as "magnificent," a confrontation as "momentous," or a death as "mysterious.")

But when it comes time to deal with the sources on which Sterling relies for some of her assertions, Neier resorts to—guess what?—adjectives. Rather than criticizing the writings of Brian Crozier, Robert Moss, John Barron, and Michael Ledeen, Neier dismisses them with a single phrase: they are "apostles of the new cold war." It is a bit harder to dismiss the testimony of General Jan Sejna of Czechoslovakia who defected to the West after serving in a high military post and who confirms many of Sterling's statements. What Neier can do, and does, is to raise an eyebrow because Sejna, who defected in 1968, did not make known his evidence about Soviet involvement in terrorist training camps until much later. (Imagine what Neier would have written had Sejna said all this in 1968, fresh from Prague. The sneer would then probably have taken this form: "Sejna, who could not wait to trumpet his accusations, rushed into print with. . . .")

Apart from the adjective count and the crude attempt at character assassination, the essence of the Neier critique is to create a straw man and then slay it. His summary of the Sterling book is as follows: "The Soviet Union calls all the shots." This is very different from what she in fact says. Her argument is best summarized in her own words: "In effect, the Soviet Union had simply laid a loaded gun on the table, leaving others to get on with it." The Kremlin did not call all the shots, it simply made it easier for terrorists to get the training and equipment to do the shooting.

Since Neier distorts the argument beyond recognition, it is important to be clear just what Sterling is saying and what, for so long, the West was denying. Soviet complicity could range from simply allowing suspected terrorists to come and go in its satellite states to directing from some central headquarters each and every hijacking, bombing, and kidnapping. Sterling does not assert the "Moscow Mastermind" version of world terrorism; she asserts only that Moscow, directly or through such clients as Cuba and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, provided the weapons, the training, the sanctuaries, and the right introductions to a wide, fragmented, but increasingly interconnected set of terrorist groups.

This aspect of the debate reminds me of arguments we used to have about the Mafia. You could easily prove it did not exist simply by assuming that what was meant by a "Mafia" was a centrally directed, national criminal conspiracy that operated with the same precision and hierarchical controls that one might find in, say, AT&T; since it was ludicrous to suppose that any such criminal organization could exist and no evidence that anything like it did exist, one could dismiss the Mafia as a myth, the product of overheated police imagination. This line of argument spared one the necessity of investigating the possibility that certain groups of criminals in certain localities were able, by means of political corruption, physical extortion, and familial ties, to create and maintain, for certain limited purposes, moderate-size criminal organizations with loose ties to similar organizations in other places. As countless investigative reports and trial records show, organized crime in this sense is very real indeed.

One can also symphathize with the fear of any revival of a domestic witch hunt; I recall the McCarthy era quite well, and it was an appalling episode. But scarcely anyone—certainly not Claire Sterling, and not Secretary Haig—is calling for anything like this. They are talking of *international* terrorism and of the support it has received from the Soviet Union and Soviet satellites, and suggesting that we should take this more seriously than we have done. And FBI Director William H. Webster has made it clear that he is not asking for his organization to be "unleashed," nor does he believe that we currently have a major domestic security problem.

But if no responsible person is propounding the Moscow Mastermind hypothesis or calling for a domestic crackdown on political dissidents, why does a leading newspaper, the chairman of a congressional subcommittee, a well-known columnist, and a spokesman for civil-liberties groups react with such disbelief and distaste to the suggestion that the Soviet Union has been implicated in ter-

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rorism in ways that have made its consequences—its bloody human cost—far worse than anything that would have resulted from the mere expression of "indigenous tensions"?

We have here, I think, the double standard of political morality once again. Such a double standard is by no means the monopoly of liberals—I recall otherwise respectable Southern conservatives denying that the Ku Klux Klan had an organized terrorist component, and otherwise intelligent government officials viewing with studied skepticism the evidence for the Holocaust—but in this case it is being applied almost exclusively by liberals.

Claire Sterling begins her book by admitting to the influence of the double standard on her own thinking, and, having admitted it, overcome it: "It would have been easier for me to write about Black (i.e., fascist) terrorists, always a virtuous pursuit—and now, once again, becoming a singularly urgent one. Writing about left-wing Red terrorists did not make me feel virtuous: it saddened me." The reason for the sadness is clear: "Few of us, in my generation or my children's, can easily shake off the belief that Left is always and necessarily good. The feeling is particularly strong in situations where Right is so obviously bad." The book ends where it begins—with the observation that there are no good or bad killers, there are only killers.

Sentence by sentence, the book is easy to read; taken as a whole, however, it is hard to follow. It is repetitious, poorly organized, and lacking in the clarity one would want in a legal brief or formal indictment. But it is totally compelling; indeed, the very repetition, as events unfold and hidden connections become palpable, seems to recapitulate in a convincing manner the author's own struggle to accept the bits and pieces of evidence as they come to her through the gory haze of murder and mayhem. Because it lacks the structure of a formal argument, readers who do not want to believe its message can find reason for dismissing it as a collection of rumors, hearsay, and supposition. That would be a great mistake.

SUPPOSE you wished to reject the hypothesis that the Soviet Union, either directly or through its satellite regimes, was deeply involved in a variety of terrorist enterprises. Suppose further that you were skeptical of the claims of unnamed "Western intelligence sources." You would still have to explain, or explain away, the following facts:

• When the wealthy Italian publisher and financial patron of the red underground, Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, was killed by a bomb he was trying to affix to a high-tension pylon near Milan, the police discovered that he had a false passport showing that he had made, under an assumed name, at least twenty-two visits to Czechoslovakia.

• When General Jan Sejna, military counselor to the Central Committee of the Czech Communist party, defected to the West in 1968, he brought with him a list of thirteen Italians, including Feltrinelli, who had attended a KGB school for terrorists set up in Karlovy Mar.

• After the Italian police began to crack the Red Brigades, a key leader, Patrizio Peci, confessed, stating, among other things, that Red Brigade members had attended training schools in Czechoslovakia throughout the 1970's and had received Czech-made arms, shipped from Prague by way of Hungary and Austria.

• When the Israeli police arrested a Dutch terrorist, Ludwina Janssen, she confessed that she had been trained by Cuban instructors at camps in South Yemen, a Soviet satellite regime, and that there were also in attendance at these camps students from the Provisional Wing of the IRA, the German Revolutionary Cells, and other terrorist groups in Japan, Latin America, and the Middle East. All this was subsequently confirmed by a German terrorist who defected and who had actually taught at a camp in Aden.

• When the Irish navy seized the S.S. *Claudia* in 1973, it was carrying Soviet-bloc arms consigned to the IRA and accompanied by an IRA member. Four years later, another ship was seized off Antwerp—the S.S. *Towerstream*—and it was also loaded with Soviet-bloc weapons destined for the IRA. In 1971, the Dutch police seized a shipment of Czech arms, ordered by the IRA from Omnipol, an arms factory in Prague, at the Schiphol airport. An IRA member was later to write that they ordered the weapons from an illustrated catalogue supplied them in Prague.

• When Viktor Sakharov defected from the KGB, he described being trained in the South Yemen camps for his assignment—to work in Kuwait on plans to mount terrorist campaigns in Arab nations and in Turkey.

• After several dozen fedayeen were arrested in Israel, they admitted—both to the Israeli police and later to a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reporter—that they had been trained in Soviet camps located near the Black Sea.

• Terrorist training camps in Yemen and Libya were staffed by, among others, Cuban instructors long after Cuba had become totally dependent on the Soviet Union and the Cuban Intelligence Service (DGI) had become an adjunct of the KGB.

IN THE light of all this, it is a bit hard to understand why Secretary Haig's statement about Soviet complicity should

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have been the occasion for so much journalistic tongue-clucking. Imagine, if you will, what the attitude of the press would be if comparable facts had come to light about United States involvement in terrorist—or even *counter*-terrorist—activities in Latin America. Imagine, that is, where the burden of proof would be assumed to lie if William F. Buckley, Jr. had been found traveling to Chile under a false passport, if a defector revealed that he had learned terrorist tactics in a South African training camp staffed with Puerto Rican instructors, or if a Panamanian ship loaded with American weapons had been seized en route to guerrilla forces operating against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

Let us be clear about what we do not know. We do not know the extent, if any, to which the Soviets direct any terrorist organization. Moscow seems to have had great influence over the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) but less over other factions within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Most of the money for many terrorist groups probably comes, not from the Soviet Union, but from wealthy Arab nations and from criminal activities.

Moreover, right-wing terrorism is on the rise: there have been bombings of a French synagogue, an Italian railroad station, and a German festival that have been the work, apparently, of various fascist groups. It ought to be possible to condemn terrorism no matter who commits it, but what passes for an intellectual discussion of the matter today seems not to allow of that possibility. Instead of proposing a definition of terrorism and then attempting to deal with it in all its ugly manifestations, we seem locked into the familiar rhetorical tactic of answering a charge by leveling a charge. The key to this is the speed and facility with which one can employ the phrase, "But what about. . . ," followed by some atrocity allegedly committed by your opponent:

"The Soviet Union murdered its own citizens in the Gulag."
—*But what about* the Indians at Wounded Knee?

"The IRA Provos kill innocent persons in Belfast."
—*But what about* the torture of Jacobo Timerman by the Argentine police?

"The Soviet Union is supporting world terrorism."
—*But what about* the CIA in Chile?

The tactic is not confined to foreign affairs. When I speak about the problem of urban street crime to a college audience, the first rejoinder is usually, "*But what about* pollution?" (or poorly designed Pintos, or the Lockheed loan, or Watergate).

The purpose of such tactics, obviously, is to avoid the discussion of an issue by changing the subject in a manner that implies the moral inferiority of your opponent. Since there is always more than one evil loose in the world, this method means that no single evil can ever be discussed without discussing all evils simultaneously. And since one cannot, even in principle, discuss all things at once, nothing can be discussed. Moreover, the "but-what-about?" rejoinder implies that the counter-example is precisely analogous to the original example and, thus, that no distinctions among cases can be made. Since the essence of intelligent discussion is the willingness and capacity to make useful distinctions, the "what-about" gambit renders discussion impossible.

An especially deplorable, but by no means unusual, example of this kind of intellectual obfuscation can be found in a review of the Sterling book by Jonathan Marshall. Writing in *Inquiry*, Marshall asserts that Israel is a client state of the United States much as Cuba is a client of the Soviet Union. Having implied that the two cases are analogous, Marshall can accuse Sterling of practicing a double standard by failing to condemn the "regular practice of terrorism" by Israel, an American "surrogate."

I had not thought that anyone's capacity to make distinctions had atrophied to the point of being unable to find differences between the two instances. The Soviets control the DGI; the Americans, at best, can only envy the Mossad. Israel is a free society with a vociferous opposition; Cuba is a closed society with an imprisoned or émigré opposition. Cuban instructors teach terrorists from a score of nations how to kill in order not to defend Cuba but to "destabilize" the rest of the world; Israel launches reprisals against those who have attacked it. There are few simple rules by which to evaluate the actions of a beleaguered democracy—no doubt some of Israel's acts deserve condemnation—but it is not hard to know what to think of a totalitarian regime that has sold itself, lock, stock, and barrel, to an imperialist power.

LET us try to clear away this thicket of rhetorical tricks and offer a definition of terrorism. Though perhaps it can be improved upon, I would begin with that adopted by a conference on international terrorism held in Jerusalem in 1979: terrorism is the "deliberate, systematic murder, maiming, and menacing of the innocent to inspire fear in order to gain political ends."*

Whatever its deficiencies, this definition at least permits one to distinguish between pure terrorism (e.g., random murder in Turkey) and guerrilla

* *International Terrorism: Challenge and Response*, Proceedings of the Jerusalem Conference on International Terrorism (The Jonathan Institute, Jerusalem, 1980), p. 361.

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warfare directed at the political or military arms of an occupying power. It also suggests a difference between force used to disrupt a particular political or military order and force used to make impossible the maintenance of any form of order under any auspices. Moreover, the definition implies that one must judge any killing by the extent to which other, less violent means exist to achieve political ends. If terror is practiced in a society with free elections, open courts, and a legitimate opposition it is more despicable than when terror, even defined as the killing of innocent persons, occurs in a society where no alternative means of change exists.

Such a definition can be applied to terror of the Right as well as of the Left, terror practiced by a government as well as terror practiced by those who oppose a government. If there is one thing wrong with the definition, however, it is the implication that there are known "political ends" toward which terror is customarily directed. Sometimes there are: the aims of terror in the Soviet Union or in Nazi Germany were plain enough—to maintain the position of those in power. But just as often there are not: who can describe in anything more than empty generalities the political aims of the IRA Provos or the Red Brigades? For many of their members, the purpose of terrorism is simply to terrorize. The modern terrorist employs it, not as a last resort, but as a preferred method; as Paul Johnson has written, the terrorist exalts violence over other forms of political activity. This leads in turn to the suppression of the natural moral instincts so that it is no longer easy —perhaps no longer possible—for members of such conspiracies to distinguish between the political zealot and the psychopathic killer. The routinization of violence, the melding of the true believer and the bloodthirsty killer, leads to the final irony. As Johnson has pointed out, terrorism assists in the spread of the totalitarian state.

Not all political violence we see in the world about us deserves to be called terrorism, but enough of it does to make one wonder why some of us strain to call it something else. A favorite intellectual device is to remark that what to one person is a terrorist is to another person a revolutionary hero, as if it were not possible to distinguish between terrorists and heroes. This kind of moral relativism, applied to ordinary shootings, would make it impossible to describe a common criminal. Does anyone really think it especially helpful, or even decent, to remark that one person's mass murderer is another person's "role model"?

We are more inclined to confound terrorists with heroes than we are to confuse psychotic killers with decent people because the former claim a political justification, and we tend to accept political justifications for acts that are otherwise unjustifiable. That acceptance might be defensible—if not persuasive—if we examined with care the justification, but usually we do not. We simply note that a person claims a political motive, that he employs some conventional bits of ideological bluster, and then assume that this must indicate the existence of some well-reasoned political argument that, had we the time and opportunity, we could discover. On the contrary, there is typically less to the matter than meets the ear.

Consider the Provisional Wing of the IRA. The recent suicides of some imprisoned IRA members, in the name of acquiring the status of "political prisoner"—*none*, of course, was imprisoned for his political views; all are in jail for having broken the criminal law—have led many Americans to assume that the IRA Provos are in fact making political claims and that therefore there exists, at least in principle, a "political solution." Some observers may even think that what is wanted is simply for the British to withdraw from Northern Ireland, or the Catholics to win more rights, or the country to be unified.

But listen to the words of the Provos: "We see no future in power-sharing." The IRA is as opposed to the regularly elected, democratic government of Ireland as it is to the Protestant leaders of the North or to the British army. The Provos want a "democratic socialist republic" to replace not merely the rulers of Ulster but the "Quisling regime" of Ireland as a whole. All existing governments, South and North, must be "demolished." It is of course precisely because they speak this language that they have been able to attract funds from Libya and arms from Czechoslovakia. If you ask them to be a bit clearer about just what they have in mind, and how they justify it, you are not likely to get an answer.

THERE are essentially two ways of thinking about terrorism. One is to assume that terrorists are but an extreme expression of underlying social injustices and political tensions and that this symptom cannot be treated without first treating the underlying causes. This view is half right: terrorism rarely exists for long where there is neither freedom nor injustice. The error in this view is the assumption that if the underlying causes can be addressed, the extremist symptoms will disappear.

This is an error because it overlooks the second way of thinking about terrorism—the way Claire Sterling makes so vivid for us. It is that, whatever the root causes of terrorism and the underground political culture that gives it nurture, the terrorists quickly and inevitably develop a stake in *opposing solutions to the problems*. They will do whatever they can, make whatever alliances are necessary (including alliances with common criminals and homicidal maniacs), to prevent any "political solution" short of the destruction of the state itself. They will thus direct their attacks chiefly against groups desirous of constructive

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change. The Red Brigades, after all, killed Aldo Moro, a center-liberal politician, and not some monarchist fanatic. The aim of the true terrorist is not to hasten progress, but to provoke a fascist reaction. The most encouraging thing to know about the terrorist network is that in the West, after a dozen years of trying, and endless bloodshed, it has failed.

THIS suggests why it is important to recognize that the Soviet Union has aided parts of the terrorist enterprise. It is not because we can get them to stop it (for all I know, they may have stopped already), or because being aware of the facts of Soviet involvement makes it easier to cope with terrorism from a law-enforcement point of view. The most important reason is that it tells us something about the nature of terrorism itself and puts us on our guard against assuming that it is the natural result of social inequity. If we judge, as we have tended to do, the quality of a society or a regime by the amount of terrorism directed at it, assuming that the level of violence is a measure of the degree of injustice, then we may be making a very great error. For to the extent other nations abet and support terrorism, the correlation, otherwise perhaps natural, between the level of injustice and the level of violence in a democratic society is distorted. So long as we think terrorism natural or inevitable, or wholly the product of underlying causes, we cannot be prepared for what in fact happens. Once West Germany was sufficiently aroused, it was able to destroy the Baader-Meinhof gang without destroying German democracy. After Aldo Moro was murdered, the Italian police broke the back of the Red Brigades. *Society* did not change; terrorism changed.

Unfortunately, the story does not always have a happy ending. The Tupamaro terrorists did not manage to take over Uruguay, but they did manage to destroy what once had been a model Latin American democracy. The terrorists of Spain are attempting to block the first careful, encouraging, but incomplete steps of that country back toward democratic rule. The terrorists of Turkey have precipitated a military takeover. Spain and Turkey are the test cases; we can only hope they do not become the next Uruguay.

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Hunger and Ideology

Nick Eberstadt

WORLD hunger is not only a material problem, but an intellectual problem as well. To an extent we do not fully recognize, the hunger which stalks millions of wretched families and homeless drifters is related to a lack of understanding and a want of ingenuity.

These are not failings of the poor themselves. Quite the contrary: anyone who has spent time in the villages of Asia can testify that the world's greatest economists are the illiterate women, for somehow they manage to keep their families fed on what seem like impossibly small budgets. The problem lies at precisely the opposite end of the social spectrum, with the well-educated, well-paid, and well-meaning functionaries who are meant to attend to world poverty and the desperate hunger it causes. These men and women do not lack the funds with which to make greater inroads against severe want, nor do they lack the good will of the world's free and affluent peoples. What they lack, quite simply, is understanding. Their misinterpretations of the world food situation are frequently so fundamental as to impede significantly the effort to eliminate malnutrition.

To be sure, there are some valid reasons for the confusion which surrounds this subject. Much of the information we must work with is inadequate. There are for example discrepancies of nearly fifteen million tons—about as much as Bangladesh uses to feed itself—between U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates on food-grain exports from *developed* countries—and those are estimates that are relatively easy to compile and relatively error-free. Evaluations of the severity of hunger are likewise dogged by ambiguity: depending on the assumptions, one can "prove" that the average Bengali needs nearly 2,400 calories a day, or only 1,600.

Most of our confusion, however, arises not from inexactitudes like these but from ideological argumentation and *idées fixes*. To a distressing degree, those charged with helping the world's poor do their work without regard for readily available information which would challenge their approach and their conclusions. Needless to say, the hungry suffer for this.

In the welter of common misperceptions about the world's food situation, four myths are particularly injurious. These are the myths of widespread and growing hunger; of increasing agricultural scarcity; of an ominous turn away from self-sufficiency and toward a reliance on foreign grain; and of the superiority of "socialist" economics in food production.

WIDESPREAD AND GROWING HUNGER. With few exceptions, authorities in the fight against world hunger depict the situation as almost unimaginably bad. FAO figures suggest that about half-a-billion people in the less developed countries (excluding China) suffer from a malnutrition so acute that they would probably be hospitalized if they lived in Europe or the United States. The World Bank estimates that about three-fifths of the families in poor non-Communist nations—nearly one-and-a-half-billion people—do not get enough food to fill their caloric needs. Robert McNamara, the Bank's president, has stated that 30 million children die of starvation each year. Tens of millions who survive, moreover, are said to be permanently crippled by irreversible, hunger-induced brain damage. As far as these experts can tell, the situation is getting no better; in fact, despite thirty years of relief programs backed up by relatively rapid economic growth, the poor world may be getting even hungrier.

Such shocking assessments may be consistent with the politics of budgetary requests within the hunger industry. They are certainly consistent with the apocalyptic preachings of those who claim the world is currently unable to feed itself, and who place the blame on anything from the incontinence of the poor to the irredeemable rottenness of capitalism. But they are quite simply inconsistent with the most basic and readily obtainable facts on the world's food situation.

McNamara's assertion, for example, is flatly wrong. Demographic figures are subject to consid-

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erable uncertainty, but no serious estimate of the annual number of child deaths would be higher than 17 million, and a more reasonable figure would probably be 15 million.* This would include deaths from all causes: accidents, trauma, maternal neglect, bad sanitary conditions, and lack of medical care. Even if hunger were completely eliminated, many—perhaps more than half—of these tragic deaths would continue. McNamara's claim, then, is something like four times too high.

Likewise, the lament that countless numbers of unfortunates in the poor world are mentally deficient is a rhetorical convenience. For better or worse, human beings are not nearly so frail as doctors, social planners, and other concerned administrators sometimes assume. As Lewis Thomas once wrote, "Far from being ineptly put together, we are amazingly tough, durable organisms, full of health, ready for most contingencies." Rather than collapsing at the first sign of adversity, the human body protects itself from environmental insult, and protects especially the two systems most necessary for survival, the organs of reproduction and of thought. John Bongaarts has shown that women's fertility is basically unaffected by nutrition until the point where they are beset by starvation, when they would not be able to provide for their newborn. As for mental activity, Rose Frisch once demonstrated that every important experiment "proving" the connection between mild or moderate malnutrition and human brain damage is embarrassingly flawed in construction or interpretation. Subsequent analyses support her conclusions. In reality, if one is so starved that one's brain will be seriously and irreversibly damaged one is not likely to live to tell about it.†

Authoritative estimates of the prevalence of hunger may be numbingly grim, but when we bring ourselves to look at them squarely we learn that they are superficial and deceptive. Take the World Bank's count. With the Bank's "Reutlinger-Selowsky" malnutrition methodology, one comes to the chilling conclusion that something like three-fifths of the people in low-income countries live under the shadow of "caloric deficits." On inspection, however, the numbers this formula churns out prove meaningless. In Taiwan, for example, caloric deprivation would be ascribed to 48 percent of the population; in Hong Kong, to 46 percent. This sounds serious indeed, until one learns that life expectancy in both places is over seventy-two—about the same, in fact, as in Finland or Austria.

As this might suggest, the World Bank method is unable to assess the incidence of hunger in a useful way. This formula, and others which imitate it, implicitly insists that anyone eating less than some fixed nutritional average *must* be underfed. Forgotten is the obvious fact that human needs vary. This is a simple mistake, and it is not a new one. In the depths of the Depression, Sir Arthur Bowley announced that the United Kingdom was in the midst of a nutritional emergency: according to his figures, about half the country was ingesting less than the average caloric requirement. The government politely rejected his report, pointing out that about half the country would probably need less than the average caloric requirement *by definition*. This may have been obvious in the 1930's, but it seems to escape most of our hunger experts today.

FAO figures are no better. In 1950, the FAO's director, Lord Boyd-Orr, wrote that two-thirds of mankind lived with the threat of hunger. His report apparently based its conclusion on a simple computational error, a transposition of columns. Though the mistake was pointed out, it was never corrected, or even officially acknowledged. In the more than thirty years since that gaffe the FAO has not done much to improve its reputation for attention to detail and respect for accuracy. Most of the data and calculations in its first three World Food Surveys, the last of them released in 1963, are still not available for outside inspection. In 1974 an unexplained revision in methodology raised the FAO estimate of the incidence of serious hunger from 360 million to 434 million—or from exactly 20 percent to exactly 25 percent of the Third World—just in time for the World Food Conference. Currently the FAO computes its hunger figures with a modified version of the World Bank Reutlinger-Selowsky formula.**

HUNGER, it seems, is not as easy to measure as we might have thought. It is difficult to find out how much the poor actually eat, for one of the hallmarks of poverty is social invisibility. If we did know how much the poor were eating, though, we still might not know how hungry they were. Food needs vary from person to person, often by 50 percent, not infrequently by 100 percent. Food needs also vary for any given person over time, depending on whether or not he is sick: intestinal bacteria, for example, may eat as much as 10 percent of any Bengali child's meal. And food needs vary with the availability of food. The body can metabolize what it consumes with

* See Davidson R. Gwatkin, "How Many Die? A Set of Demographic Estimates of the Annual Number of Infant and Child Deaths in the World," *American Journal of Public Health*, December 1980.

† This does not mean that we can afford to be complacent about the plight of the wretched and the dispossessed. Rather, it means that there is still hope for the tens of millions whose lives are dominated by desperate poverty. In 1950 nutritional and economic levels in South Korea and what is now Bangladesh were about the same. This did not prevent the South Koreans from learning the skills which were to facilitate one of the quickest and most dramatic escapes from poverty in the history of nations.

** See Thomas T. Poleman, *Quantifying the Nutritional Situation in Developing Countries*, Cornell University Agricultural Staff Paper, 1979.

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greater or lesser efficiency, depending on need: we seldom use or store as much as 40 percent of the food energy in the things we eat.

If we wanted to get a meaningful impression of the extent of hunger, we might start by looking at the *results* of eating patterns. What nutritionists call "anthropometric" tests, such as weight-for-age and weight-for-height readings or measurements of arm and head circumference can tell us important things about the nutritional well-being of a population. By the time they are five, for example, Guatemalan Indian children are shorter and lighter than the children of Central African Pygmies (although what is called "catch-up growth" eliminates this difference later on).

Unfortunately, anthropometric data can be easily misinterpreted. If Asian boys and girls are measured against an American or Swedish ideal, the findings will probably be meaningless. One recent AID study painted a sorry picture of Sri Lanka: by American height and weight references, 42 percent of the nation's children were moderately or severely malnourished; less than 10 percent were "normal." If these researchers had bothered to measure life spans, however, they would have found that the average Sri Lankan can expect to live nearly seventy years, or about as long as the average Belgian in 1968. At that time the Belgians were the most abundantly fed people on earth, with only a few thousand derelicts and vagrants among them thought to be hungry.

Evidently, it is possible to be "small but healthy," to borrow a phrase from David Seckler. Most nutritionists do not seem to appreciate this. A recent study by the Pan American Health Organization concluded that more than 49 percent of the populations of Barbados, Costa Rica, Guyana, Jamaica, and Panama suffered from some degree of malnutrition. Yet none of these countries has a life expectancy under seventy.

A proper examination of serious hunger might relate such things as height and weight to death rates—which has hardly ever been done. In this connection the findings of Lincoln Chen and his colleagues at the Cholera Research Laboratory in Bangladesh are instructive.* In the district of Matlab Bazaar, death rates for children typed as "normal," "mildly malnourished," and "moderately malnourished" were all about the same—in fact, "normal" children died slightly more frequently than did their smaller and lighter playmates. But children who were "severely malnourished"—those 40 percent or more below their "reference weight"—died in droves: their mortality rates were four to six times higher than for all other boys and girls the same age. This would certainly suggest that attention be concentrated first on the fraction of he world's population that is *severely* underfed.

How large would that fraction be? According to a World Health Organization survey a decade back, almost ten million children under five were "seriously malnourished" by anthropometric criteria. Obviously, that number vastly understates the full extent of serious hunger: some children will always be misclassified; at any point the number dangerously hungry will be lower than for the year as a whole, owing to the rhythm of the harvest and the vagaries of parental fortune; boys and girls do not develop an immunity to hunger on their fifth birthday. To correct for these biases, and to take account of China, Indochina, and North Korea, which are usually excluded from such studies, we should probably multiply this figure by an order of magnitude, and put the world's desperately hungry population at something like 100 million.

Attending to about 100 million people spread across perhaps ninety or a hundred countries would be an enormous task, but a *manageable* one. Concerted international action could conceivably eliminate the most horrifying manifestations of hunger in a matter of years. By reciting inflated figures which have already lost their shock value, hunger experts risk making the problem seem hopelessly large.

Of course, simply preventing the desperately needy from succumbing to death by starvation can in no sense be construed as a fully satisfactory solution to the hunger problem. There is a world of difference between being kept alive and living; checking deadly hunger is only a first step. Many tens of millions of families who do not show up in the rosters of stark malnutrition would choose to eat more if only they had the money. In this sense, the hunger problem will not be resolved until involuntary hunger of all degrees is eliminated—though even then nutritional troubles can be expected to persist, if of an entirely different nature and severity.

THREE final points should be made about serious hunger. First, while we think of it as an Asian problem, the incidence of severe malnutrition is highest in black Africa. This is reflected, if imperfectly, by a consistent and alarmingly high incidence of acute nutritional deprivation as revealed by anthropometric testing, and by a life expectancy which for black Africa as a whole falls about six years below India's. Whatever India's problems may be, its peoples can rely on a highly sophisticated government apparatus which has both the ability and the inclination to deal with sudden hunger. Few Africans are so fortunate.

Second, severe hunger is a greater problem for the countryside than for the city, both in absolute and relative terms. To be sure, urban hunger is

* Lincoln C. Chen *et al.*, "Anthropometric Assessment of Energy-Protein Malnutrition and Subsequent Risk of Mortality Among Preschool-Aged Children," *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, August 1980.

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more visible, more dangerous politically, and more immediately influenced by the limited tools available to poor governments. Throughout the poor world, however, it is villagers who are the more needy. The hunger which Western visitors encounter in the big cities of the poor world is shocking enough, but the fact of the matter is that children grow more slowly, and end up smaller and lighter, in the countryside. They also die earlier: in India, for example, a person born into the comparatively easy routine of city life can expect to live about ten years longer than one who must work and eat in the country.

Finally, prognostications notwithstanding, the world hunger situation does seem to be improving. If 100 million is about the right figure for those threatened with dangerous hunger, this would be slightly more than 2 percent of the world's population: a lower fraction, in all likelihood, than for any previous generation in man's recorded history. In the past thirty years, life expectancy in the less developed countries, excluding China, has risen by more than a third (and China's may be up by 50 percent). In the past twenty years in these same nations, death rates for one-to-four-year-olds, the age group most vulnerable to nutritional setback, have dropped by nearly half.

This does not mean that hunger and ill health have disappeared from the poor world: the nearly twenty-year gap in life expectancies between the rich and the poor nations is grim testimony that they have not. The fact that much remains to be done, however, should not blind us to the progress that has been made or to the very real possibility that we are now within striking distance of eliminating the most extreme forms of hunger.

GROWING AND INEVITABLE SCARCITY. To solve a problem we must understand its causes. Several of the important "schools of thought" concerning the hunger problem deter us from doing this.

Take the Malthusian position, recently embraced by no less prestigious a document than the *Global 2000* report prepared for President Carter. In its strictest construction, this argument holds that since there are too few goods and resources to go around, poverty and hunger are inevitable. Man's insatiable appetites, in this view, have outstripped the capacities of our fragile ecosystem to sustain them; if disaster is to be avoided we must ruthlessly cut back the wealth of the rich world and the fertility of the poor.

The case against this position is so thorough that it is hard to know where to begin. Perhaps a good place would be the current global availability of food. Let us disregard for a moment such things as tubers, vegetables, fruit, nuts, legumes, sugars, food oils, fish, and range-sized livestock. Even without these, food-grain production *by itself* could satisfy not only the caloric needs of the entire world population, but of a billion people beyond. This is a *conservative* estimate.

Moreover, as the worldwide decline in mortality might suggest, food is not becoming scarcer. Since 1950 worldwide per-capita food production has risen by about 40 percent, according to the USDA. Even the FAO admits the situation has improved dramatically, although by its count the rise is less than 30 percent. Since consumers prefer meat, vegetables, and sweet foods to cereals and root crops, this means that man's diet has also improved in quality and digestibility.

The benefits of progress, however, are never evenly spread. By conventional measures, poor nations have profited less than rich ones from the postwar prosperity. Even so, the poor world seems to be on a course toward greater abundance. Over the past twenty-five years, grain production per person in the less developed world (again excluding China) rose by about 13 percent.

This figure significantly understates the increase in overall availability, for in that same period the trade position of the less developed nations shifted from one of rough self-sufficiency to a heavy reliance on food imports. Whatever else this may have done, it necessarily increased the amount of food available for consumption. If FAO and USDA figures can be relied on, caloric intake, to say nothing of diet quality, has improved in each major region of the poor world over each decade—except perhaps for China. When caloric need is measured in terms of functional requirements rather than aesthetic ideals, the only nation whose food supplies unquestionably fall short is Cambodia, whose leaders deliberately induced agricultural disaster. Hunger in the poor nations, then, would seem to be neither necessary nor inevitable.

Contrary to Malthusian doctrine, there is no measurable evidence that global agricultural production is pushing against environmentally determined limits. While it is true that poorly managed farms and pastures are degrading the soil in Nepal, the Sahel, and elsewhere, there is nothing inevitable about this deterioration: improved cultivation and conservation practices could restore them, as agronomists at the Rockefeller Foundation and elsewhere have shown. If anything, agricultural resources are becoming *less* scarce. Between 1950 and 1980, thanks to the persistent and careful work of farmers, the world's arable area—that fraction fit for cultivation—grew by more than 20 percent, and at an even more rapid rate in the poor countries as a whole. In the decade ending in 1977, the world's irrigated acreage shot up more than 25 percent.

As for fertilizer, pesticide, seeds, and simple machinery, perhaps the best measure of scarcity is price (after all, prices in some sense are meant to indicate relative scarcity). Adjusting for inflation, we find that such prices have dropped meaning-

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fully in the past thirty years, often by more than 50 percent. Only energy is more expensive today than it was thirty years ago, and this is a commodity for which a scarcity has been deliberately contrived.

A final measure of scarcity in world agriculture might seem to be the export prices of American wheat and corn, which underpin the international food market. Adjusting for inflation, we find that these cost less now than in the early 1960's—or in any earlier period, for that matter. And this is not because American farmers have been marginalized; last year per-capita income for U.S. agricultural workers surpassed that for non-agricultural workers.

What Malthusians always forget is that social and economic systems are not static and inflexible. Ours is an age of innovation, and innovations tend to find uses for materials which were previously valueless: sand, bauxite, petroleum. Innovations also tend to occur precisely in response to shortages. We should not conclude that innovation offers us the panacea that proponents of technological utopias sometimes claim: new ideas and inventions do not appear on request; technological change has a social cost, which can be very high; and innovation is a long-term process, while many of man's most troublesome problems press him in the short term. Nevertheless, given the flexibility and creativity of the modern economy, ours may actually prove to be an age of *increasing* availability of resources. As Julian Simon has pointed out, the "ultimate resource" is human talent, and this is a resource which grows through being used. Praetorian sterilization programs or forced reductions in living standards are not the means to encourage its utilization.

OMINOUS FOOD DEFICITS. To many development experts, the increasing reliance on foreign grain in the poor world is cause for alarm. Last year the net imports of the less developed countries (including China) totaled nearly 70 million tons, up from about 20 million tons in 1960; this group had been essentially self-sufficient in the early 1950's, and had exported a net of about 10 million tons in the 1930's. Sterling Wortman and Ralph Cummings, authors of the otherwise sober *To Feed This World*, term this a trend of "ominous food deficits," and a report of the International Food Policy Research Institute concludes, with a mixture of horror and disbelief, that if trends continue the poor regions, exclusive of China, might import as much as 120 million tons of grain by 1990. Implicit is the notion that imports by themselves are proof that a nation can no longer feed itself, or that it has lost its race against population.

The economists and agronomists who urge the less developed countries to restore their import independence view the reliance on outside food both as a sign of hunger and as a hindrance to development. But their analysis is fundamentally flawed. It confuses biological need with economic demand, two things which have nothing to do with each other. Purchases reflect the choices of those who have money to spend; they do not necessarily signify the satisfaction of an irreducible minimum of needs. Taiwan's 18 million people purchase more American food than Africa's 400 million; this is not because they are more hungry. Conversely, the current net export positions of Burundi, Burma, and India should not be taken to mean that these nations have finally eliminated malnutrition.

By the same token, a nation's dependence on foreign food tells us nothing by itself about its development prospects. Rising food deficits did not prevent Israel and Japan from achieving spectacular rates of economic growth. On the other hand, a rising volume of food exports has not stopped Argentina from sliding back into the Third World.

It would be a mistake to assume that food imports cripple less developed countries financially. The so-called "developing market economies"—the poor world minus OPEC, China, and the smaller Communist states—sold more than $250 billion of goods and services last year. Their net food-grain bill amounted to about $10 billion, or something like 4 percent of their exports. For the poorest nations within this configuration, the food-grain burden was higher, but even they could pay for their purchases with less than 10 percent of their exports. (At the height of the 1972-74 food crisis, grain purchases absorbed less than 15 percent of the poorest nations' merchandise earnings.)

Despite their growing reliance on overseas food, poor nations have been able to cover their purchases with an ever shrinking fraction of their own overseas earnings. In 1960, food—a category in which grain is a relatively small component—was 15 percent of the import bill of the "middle-income countries," and 22 percent of the bill of "low-income countries." By 1977 the proportions were 12 percent and 16 percent respectively. To be sure, less developed countries face some serious financial problems, but it does seem that the poor world could afford to finance even more "ominous" food deficits than it presently does, if it were so inclined.

BUT why has food production in the poor world lagged behind articulated demand? The answer has little to do with an absolute inability to produce. Nor do "alarmingly" high rates of population growth bear much responsibility for this. It can be explained, rather, in terms of a specific set of choices made by almost every regime in the poor world in the period of decolonization and national self-assertion.

The nationalist leaders who came to power after

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World War II through the break-up of the old empires differed remarkably in their ideologies—one need only compare Nehru, say, with Sukarno or Ho Chi Minh—but on one point they were united: they did not wish to remain weak appendages of the powerful states which had controlled them. Their common ambition was to build powerful, "modern" state apparatuses which would allow their nations, or at least their national elites, to deal on equal terms with their former masters. They would of course provide themselves with all the trappings of national power: airports, sports arenas, presidential palaces. But they would also build up an industrial base, even if rapid industrialization were not economically wise.

Huge discrepancies in rates of return did not prevent the national elites from sanctioning a massive build-up of the "modern" sector at the expanse of the vast majority of the population who lived in the countryside and worked on the land. Agricultural research was neglected, and prices and taxes skewed against the farmer to hasten the growth of cities and factories.

As a result, a peculiar system of comparative advantage has arisen. In poor nations where wages are low and the large majority of the labor force works in the fields, farmers cannot produce food as cheaply as their counterparts in North America. The Indian agricultural sector, for example, uses as much energy as the American, but it produces only a third as much food; it now costs a farmer about 40 percent more to grow a ton of wheat in the Punjab than in Kansas. On the other hand, with new, state-of-the-art factories, cheap work forces, hidden subsidies, and frequently insufficient domestic markets, it is in the interests of the poor nations to export processed goods: India, for example, can forge a ton of steel for half as much as the Ruhr. Thus it makes sense for poor nations to trade their finished products for cheap Western food.*

Today's policies, which favor the city over the village and the factory over the field, are likely to impede the elimination of malnutrition. In succumbing to what Michael Lipton has termed "urban bias," politicians and professors in the poor world have skewed income distribution by financing the comfort of teamsters and physicists at the expense of blacksmiths and plowmen. By misallocating investments, they slow down economic growth. Other things being equal, this means the poor will be hungrier. The few poor countries which have refused to favor their urban minorities at the expense of the rural majority—Taiwan, South Korea, Malawi, the Ivory Coast—are all in better economic and nutritional shape than neighbors who have so favored their cities—the Philippines, North Korea, Tanzania, Ghana.

Eliminating the disadvantages under which agriculture in the less developed countries must operate would no doubt narrow income differences and speed economic growth, although hunger might not be reduced as substantially as we might first assume. By virtue of such reforms a nation's grain trade deficit might well decline. If hunger on earth were effectively eliminated, some regions of today's poor world would undoubtedly revert to self-sufficiency, and others would even generate a net food surplus. But many countries could and would undoubtedly accumulate an even larger grain-trade deficit than they have today. And there would be nothing new about such an arrangement. In many of today's rich nations, elimination of hunger was facilitated by reliance on food surpluses from other lands, for this permitted an acceleration of economic growth through an escape from the bind of agricultural self-sufficiency.

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE "SOCIALIST" SYSTEM. Still another current belief is that "capitalism" is an inferior tool in the fight against hunger, while "socialism" is an effective one.† According to this argument, capitalism is crippled by an inherently exploitative system of relations which tends to cause growing inequalities, and to produce either nutritional stagnation or hunger crises in the less developed countries. By contrast, "socialism" is said to be more rational, more efficient, oriented toward human development rather than profit, and grounded in the security of central planning. For these reasons, the argument continues, the "socialist strategy" has made strides against desperate want which "capitalist" nations have been unable to match.

Although this argument is Marxist in conception, it has won respectability among a wide range of thinkers and policy-makers who do not consider themselves radicals or even men of the Left. By 1975, for example, no less a figure than McGeorge Bundy was arguing that the success of the Chinese and Cuban experiments should make us rethink our old notions about economic development.

Rather than arguing about the theoretical merits of "socialism" versus "capitalism," let us compare the nutritional records of Communist and non-Communist nations. Evaluating Communist efforts to eliminate hunger is not a straightforward exercise. Communist states oppose the free flow of information under the best of circumstances; they

* Industrialization seems to have played less of a role in this transformation in Africa than in either Latin America or Asia. In Africa, the unhappy results described below seem to have more to do with the growth of a class of parasitic bureaucrats and the inappropriate extension of cash-cropping. Michael Lofchie addresses the latter problem in his "Origins of African Hunger," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, November 1975.

† Honest meaning was long ago beaten out of both of these terms. In standard usage the second now seems to be shorthand for "the current practices of Marxist-Leninist regimes," while the first can seemingly be applied to non-Communist systems as different as Morocco and Sweden.

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should not be expected to promote discussions of their system's shortcomings. Measuring Communist and non-Communist nations against each other, moreover, is complicated by the fact that some of the nations we would wish to compare were never really comparable. (Against whom do we judge the Mongolian People's Republic, for example? Turkey? Nepal? South Korea?) Nevertheless, state-sanctioned statistics, refugee accounts, and reports from those few invited visitors with sharp eyes and open minds do permit a telling if imperfect reconstruction of the Communist nations' performance on the hunger front.

A brief summary wil suffice. Before the first Five Year Plan in the late 1920's Soviet Russia could be ranked as a peer of Finland or Japan by some agricultural and nutritional measures; by a few it was even ahead. Today it lags embarrassingly behind: its agricultural sector is stricken by chronic and continuous failure; its consumers suffer perennial shortages not just of meat, fruit, and vegetables, but of such "luxury" goods as lard; its infant-mortality rate, unlike any in the Western world, is rising, thanks in no small part to diseases of nutritional deficiency like rickets.

Before World War II, Spain, Greece, and Italy's *mezzogiorno* were all hungrier than Czechoslavakia or Hungary; thirty-five years into the Eastern European experiment in "people's democracy," they are healthier. When Korea was partitioned, the North was richer and better fed: it possessed about 95 percent of the peninsula's industry, and had just been unburdened by the flight of 5 million citizens to the already impoverished South. After a generation of "socialist development," it is clearly now the South Koreans who are richer and better fed. As one might expect of a nation of a billion people, China's performance differs from one region to the next. Today, however, even mainlanders refer to Taiwan as "China's leading province": it has set the pace in all areas of material progress, including the reduction of hunger.

Over the past generation Thailand has come close to solving its hunger problem; by all accounts neighboring Laos, which was much poorer at the time of its "liberation," has become even hungrier since then. "Unified" Vietnam seems to have dealt with *its* hunger problem by casting its extra mouths into the sea. The nutritional plight of Cambodia is too familiar to require any description.

The performance of Marxist-Leninist regimes in Africa is difficult to judge for a number of reasons, including the fact that total control over their economies and societies has yet to be established, but at first blush Africa's hungry and neglected peoples do not seem to have fared better under the would-be totalitarians than under any of the less ambitious forms of government on that continent.

OF ALL the "socialist experiments," only two provide evidence of nutritional results noticeably better than their non-Communist neighbors: Soviet Central Asia and Cuba.* Whether total colonization by a European power would have provided Afghanistan or Iran with material results comparable to those produced by total Russian colonization in Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, or the ill-fated Kazakh Republic, we cannot say: nothing like that was ever attempted. As for Cuba, the underpinnings of its success are artificial. Aside from Cambodia and the Yemen People's Democratic Republic, Cuba is the only nation in the world with a smaller per-capita GNP today than thirty years ago. It could not possibly survive, let alone function, without enormous annual subsidies from the Soviet Union. The USSR's current grant to its Cuban showpiece is thought to be half as large as Cuba's internally generated GNP.

Socialist regimes have good reason to want their people healthy and well fed: a debilitated labor force, after all, can only impede the attainment of economic targets or political and military objectives. Total command over economy and society, moreover, can indeed be used to produce impressive and immediate material results. Under the aegis of the totalitarian state, land can be redistributed quickly and without legal obstacle; staples can be rationed, and their prices set artificially low; workers can be mobilized, and employment created, by fiat. In the People's Republic of China in the early 1950's such policies contributed to a substantial rise in living standards for the poorest half of the population. But if we can believe China's current leaders, over the next quarter-cen-

* Soviet Central Asia's progress is charted, if uncritically, in Charles K. Wilker's *The Soviet Model and the Underdeveloped Countries* (University of North Carolina Press, 1969) and in A.R. Khan and Dharam Ghai, "Collective Agriculture in Soviet Central Asia," *World Development*, April/May 1979. For some reflections on Cuba's performance, see David Morawetz's "Some Lessons from Small Socialist Countries," *World Development*, May/June 1980.

The nearest equivalent in the Western experience to the Soviet episode in Central Asia would probably be South Africa. Despite the obvious and enormous differences between these two colonial histories, there may be lessons to be learned from a comparison. On the one hand, the USSR's Central Asians are healthier and better educated than South Africa's blacks; presumably this means that they are better fed as well. On the other hand, the differentials between the living standard for blacks in South Africa and those of adjoining countries may be greater than the differentials in Central Asia: South Africa, after all, has a problem controlling the flow of illegal black *immigrants*, while Kirgizia is not thought to have an equivalent difficulty. South Africa's neglect and exploitation of its blacks, moreover, may be contrasted with the even more brutal subjection of the nomadic peoples of Central Asia, at least part of which was accomplished through Stalin's policy of deliberately inducing famine. Finally, certain statistical differences between South Africa and the Soviet Union remain difficult to explain: South African blacks, for example, have twice as high a rate of car ownership as the citizens of the USSR.

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tury living standards rose only slightly and erratically.

Total control over economy and society cuts both ways. In and of itself, it does not serve to augment resources. Instead, it concentrates power, and most frequently this impedes rather than expedites the augmentation of resources. If it can make land reform or rationing easier, it always makes it more difficult to promote technological innovation, accelerate worker productivity, or encourage flexible, creative, and efficient responses to unforeseen problems. The poor and the hungry may benefit from this tradeoff, but only on occasion, and seldom in the long run.

But the dangers of total power are not merely measured in forgone opportunities for progress. There is another aspect to "socialist policy" which nutritionists and development experts seldom confront directly.

Over the course of the 20th century there has been a noticeable and distinctly unpleasant change in the character of severe hunger. In the past, famines were usually the result of bad harvests or economic crisis; increasingly, they can be traced to deliberate acts of government.

With the rise in power and sophistication of the modern state apparatus, governments can now save their peoples from desperate hunger in a way which was impossible in the 19th century. When India's harvests failed in the mid-1960's, for example, a concerted Indian-American relief effort prevented a famine which all observers agree would have caused tens of millions of deaths. Thanks to these joint relief actions, in fact, there was no statistically observable rise in death rates in the drought-afflicted provinces.

A powerful and sophisticated state apparatus, however, can also use hunger as a weapon of assault against its enemies. There have been at least six such massive famines in the last fifty years. The hunger generated by the Soviet collectivization drive killed at least 6 million people; the starvation attendant on the Nazi atrocities, perhaps the same number; the man-made famine in Bengal in 1943, perhaps 3 million; the Biafran famine, at least 1 million; the ongoing Cambodian famine, as many as 2 million from a total population of 7 or 8 million; and China's "Three Lean Years," the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward, may have taken a toll running into the tens of millions.

Each of these famines was government-sponsored; some were even officially planned. The scale of the cruelty involved is perhaps suggested by comparison with the Sahelian famine in West Africa in the early 1970's, which was a "natural" disaster. While authoritative analyses of this tragedy tell us that the death toll from the drought will never be known precisely, they also suggest that its cost in terms of human life should be measured in thousands, not hundreds of thousands.*

It is a fact of modern life that governments across the spectrum of political inclination have inflicted starvation on their peoples by design. But the regimes which have made the most consistent practice of this call themselves "socialist." Moreover, these are the only regimes to do so *on principle*. Armed with a philosophy which can turn even their most enthusiastic supporters into "enemies of the people," and which can then justify their elimination by whatever means necessary, and lacking the internal checks which might at least moderate officially sanctioned acts of cruelty, the "socialist" states have pioneered in inflicting needless hunger on helpless populations.

More complicated than a comparison of Communist and non-Communist regimes would be a comparison of the results of "socialist"—i.e., Fabian—economic policy in the poor world with "capitalism." Sri Lanka, for example, pursued Fabian policies until quite recently; economically these may have failed, yet just as clearly they should be credited with social success. With a per-capita income which appears no greater than India's, Sri Lankans have a life expectancy about fifteen years longer. By contrast, Michael Manley's variant of "socialism" in Jamaica appears to have retarded both economic and social progress.

As for laissez-faire capitalism, this has worked well-publicized wonders in Hong Kong over the past generation, yet its results have been far less impressive in neighboring Macao. By the same token, the three black African nations which have strayed least from orthodox capitalism—Botswana, Malawi, and the Ivory Coast—have all outperformed their neighbors, but by seemingly rather different margins.

The comparative strengths of "socialist" democracy and a more rigorously defined "capitalism" in the fight against hunger is perhaps a subject which has received too little attention. Too much attention, however, has been given to Communist anti-poverty strategies. The notion that encouraging, or even acquiescing in, the growth of totalitarian governance in the poor nations will help eradicate hunger is a chimera. Everything we have learned in the past ten years suggests that Communist states are consistently, and perhaps necessarily, worse at feeding their peoples than their "capitalist" competitors.

If we were to shake off our blinders on the subject of world hunger, we would see three important things about it.

* See in particular John C. Caldwell, *The Sahelian Drought and Its Demographic Implications* (Overseas Educational Institute, 1975). In Caldwell's words, "Better roads, greater commercialization of the whole region, more awareness of what was happening . . . and massive international relief efforts all helped the people's own efforts and reduced a potentially murderous period into a very painful one."

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First, despite the blunders, caprices, and ruinous plans of so many of their leaders, the people of the poor nations are eating better today than ever before. Controlling the worst manifestations of hunger, at least in the non-Communist world, is no longer an impossible undertaking.

Second, where desperate poverty and want have been eradicated, it has not been through population control, artificially enforced food self-sufficiency, or "socialist strategies," but through the hard work of millions of men and women scattered on tiny farms, in dull villages, in dirty metropolises and suburban shantytowns, who are determined to improve their own lives and whose governments have given them the wherewithal to do so.

Finally, the United States is in a unique position to facilitate the global escape from poverty and to hasten the day when desperate hunger is eliminated. There are, in fact, a number of things we could be doing today which would measurably improve the world's nutritional status. We have not undertaken any of them, perhaps for want of the idea.

WHAT would these be? I will list seven of them here:

1. Promoting rural industry. The Japanese, Taiwanese, and South Koreans can attest to the crucial role that rural industrialization plays in the acceleration of economic growth and the elimination of hunger. In most of Asia and much of Latin America and Africa, population density places a limit on what can be expected from agriculture alone. A sound and balanced program of rural industry would provide not only the products farmers need to increase their productivity, but jobs and income for the landless laborers and displaced artisans who so frequently rank among the underfed. (A sound program of rural industry would also help stem the rush to the cities, since it would make possible the decent living which migrants leave home to find.)

Much of the technology which would be needed would be simple, inexpensive, and amenable to local repair: "rotoweeders," which roll through a rice paddy like a lawnmower; "biogas converters," which catalyze compost into usable energy; low-horsepower pumps which could tap into a locally available energy source; and so forth. Paradoxically, many of these devices are too inexpensive for international industry to develop, for their very simplicity would imperil licensing and royalty arrangements.

2. Extension training. We have already helped establish a remarkable network of international agricultural-research centers which have brought the world new, high-yielding strains of wheat and rice and improved cultivation techniques for many other crops. In many parts of the poor world, this knowledge is not reaching the farmer. There are many reasons for this; one of them is a lack of "extension agents" capable of passing it on, and then serving as intellectual middlemen between scientists and small growers.

3. Grain insurance. Man cannot average his appetite across years or even seasons. In the parlance of economists, the "demand schedule" is highly "inelastic." People have to have food to stay alive, and will pay for it what they can; thus, even a relatively modest shortfall in supply can trigger explosive increases in prices. (During the "world food crisis" of the early 1970's, for example, production never fell more than 3 percent below trend, and yet the cost of grain more than doubled in the international marketplace.) When prices go mad, food is bid out of the mouths of the hungry in much of the poor world. With America's predominance over the world grain economy, the United States could easily champion an international grain-insurance program which would be well within the range of self-finance for the poor nations and whose benefits, both economic and humanitarian, would be substantial and demonstrable.

4. Trade reform. Reducing tariffs and otherwise liberalizing access to the enormous American market would increase exports, hence jobs, income, and presumably nutritional status in the less developed countries. At the same time, it would lower the cost of goods for the American consumer and provide our industries with much needed and potentially vitalizing competition.

5. Regulating infant foods. Many children in poor nations suffer from a syndrome which Derrick Jelliffe has labeled "commerciogenic malnutrition." Mothers' milk may be the best food for infants, but for a variety of reasons growing numbers of women in poor nations are choosing to feed their babies store-bought, processed formula. Many women who buy this cannot really afford to prepare it in adequate quantities and are unable to keep it hygienic; their children suffer for this. Our government could initiate an informal, international arrangement with infant food merchandisers to protect the poor and the ignorant against the misuse of such products. In the wake of our vote against the World Health Organization infant-formula proposals, we should have a special interest in doing so.

6. Lobbying for development. Obviously, the actions of governments in poor countries will be the primary constraint on the pace at which poverty and hunger are reduced. The United States has no ultimate say over price-support systems, educational strategies, investment policies, land-tenure arrangements, or patterns of administration in independent and sovereign nations. But we should not underestimate the positive influence we may exert through the instruments at our disposal. AID, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund can all create incentives for sound

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and honest governance, liberalized trade, rural development, and technological diffusion, and these are things which will help the poor and the hungry.

7. Moral pressure. Through various forums and international channels we should be castigating, embarrassing, isolating, and punishing governments which choose to starve their people. We should ask our allies to help us in doing this. And we should ask why "humanitarian" international organizations, upon which we lavish hundreds of millions of dollars, have been so silent about such abuses. The Food and Agriculture Organization, for example, sounded no alarms about Ethiopia's deliberate neglect of its famine-stricken provinces, or Indonesia's campaign of hunger aginst the Timorese, or the Khmer Rouge and Vietnamese annihilation of Cambodia. Nor does this organization, which is charged with improving nutrition for the whole of mankind, seem to have any contingency plan for trying to feed the world's hungriest strata. Should it not be shamed for this delinquency?

THE list could be continued, but the point should be clear by now. While only a fraction of the many problems of the poor world may be solved by well-meaning Westerners, and while most of the things the West can offer require time to manifest themselves, important, even crucial, opportunities to accelerate the elimination of hunger do exist. They will not be seized so long as we remain in thrall to hallucinatory ideas about the causes of hunger.

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Varieties of Jewish Verse

Robert Alter

ONCE every few decades, an anthology appears that reaches beyond mere scissors-and-paste operations to restore to contemporary readers a lost literary past. A notable instance in English was the publication exactly sixty years ago of H. J. C. Grierson's *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems*, which coming at the very moment when T. S. Eliot and others were rebelling against the norms of 19th-century verse, brought back into the main line of the English tradition the passionately witty poets of the 17th century like Donne, Herbert, and Marvell who had long been discredited, misunderstood, or even half-forgotten.

The publication of T. Carmi's *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse** is such an event of recuperation, not only for English readers but for readers of Hebrew as well, who will discover in this bilingual volume unguessed treasures, a few of them appearing in print for the first time, others never before published out of their original liturgical contexts, or, in the case of the secular poems, many never anthologized or published in modern critical editions. There has been, in fact, as Carmi justly observes in his preface, no anthology like this in Hebrew that covers the full 3000-year span of Hebrew poetry. Though the earliest part of Carmi's anthology, a selection of fourteen biblical poems from the victory hymn in Exodus 15 to the Song of Songs, may be superfluous for some readers, it does lay the ground for one of the important revelations of the volume: the astonishing degree of continuity exhibited by Hebrew poetry through its long history and its wide geographical dispersal.

It was, of course, chiefly the authority of the Bible, both as linguistic standard and as a source of imagery and allusions, that preserved this continuity through so many different eras and cultural spheres. The *piyyut*, or liturgical verse, of Palestine and Babylonia (roughly, 6th to 11th centuries C.E.) is a partial exception to the rule of continuity because this particular tradition took disconcerting liberties with classical Hebrew grammar and vocabulary, and developed its own sometimes cryptic conventions of kenning and elaborate allusion. Elsewhere, however, the kinship of different Hebrew poems separated by centuries and continents is altogether remarkable. A reader of the poetry of Gabriel Preil and Yehuda Amichai written today in New York and Jerusalem often scarcely has to shift linguistic or aesthetic gears to move into a poem composed in Renaissance Italy, Palestine under the Romans, Babylonia in the 6th century B.C.E.

If *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse*, the product of more than a decade of painstaking research, rescues characteristic elements of a partly forgotten poetic past, it is, I would propose, even more important for what it reveals of the extraordinary variety of Jewish historical experience. Carmi has tried to make his selections historically representative, avoiding any obvious tilt toward modern preferences and concerns in his choice of the older texts. (He has also provided tactfully concise, helpful notes to the poems and a valuable introductory essay, to which is appended an incisive summary by Benjamin Hrushovski of the systems of Hebrew versification.) In any case, from the end of the biblical period to the latter part of the 10th century, there is scarcely any secular Hebrew poetry that has come down to us, apart from a very occasional brief inset of satirical or eulogistic verse in the Talmud. And since liturgical poetry is manifestly the predominant poetic genre, at least quantitatively, through the entire medieval period, readers will find a good deal of it here, joined, after the onset of the Crusades, by a liberal sampling of dirges, some affecting and a few chiefly horrific, on the massacre of Jews. These disparate Jewish communities over the ages were devout and, in some periods, acutely suffering communities, and the poems bear witness to both these aspects of the Jewish historical condition.

The invocation of devotion and suffering is inevitable, and yet those very terms entail a conjuring with stereotypes, while the vivid evidence of the poems themselves demonstrates the inadequacy of just such stereotypes of Jewish history. The Jews, so runs the formula, have always been a religion, or, according to a different ideological

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perspective, a religious civilization. The modern age, then, brings with it secularization, which makes troubling "inroads" on Jewish life. There is an obvious element of truth in this familiar way of conceiving things, but one wonders how accurate such an account might be if it should prove that during much of the pre-modern period, the secular and the religious were intimately intertwined, or that, instead of being opposed categories, the religious was often a pliable framework within which the secular could be given quiet or at times even flamboyant expression. All this is not easy to sort out because the tenor and circumstances of Jewish life over the centuries have varied so widely. A few examples, however, from different times and places may at least suggest something of the inadequacy of the conventional categories.

Let me begin with an anonymous poem—it is actually the opening section of a longer poem in the form of an alphabetic acrostic—composed in Palestine under the Byzantine empire, sometime between the 4th and the early 7th century. It is a liturgical piece, intended for use in public worship as part of the prayer for dew recited during the Passover festival. One could hardly imagine a more clearcut instance of a religious poem—verses actually framed to serve an institutional function. Here is how it reads in Carmi's translation:*

I shall sing praises now that the time of the
singing bird has come,
and I shall answer in song:
go in peace, rain.
I shall look at the deeds of my God, so pleasant
in their season,
and sweetly say:
come in peace, dew.
The rains are over and gone, the winter is past;
everything is created with beauty:
go in peace, rain.
The mandrakes give forth their perfume in the
lovers' garden;
sorrows are past:
come in peace, dew.
The earth is crowned with new grain and wine,
and everything cries:
go in peace, rain!

This gives a fair sense of the lovely lyric simplicity of the original, though, as one might guess, the Hebrew has a quality of delicate musicality absent from the English version (there is, to cite a single instance, a nicely orchestrated play of sound and meaning in "mandrakes," *dudaim*, "lovers," *dodim*, and "sorrows," *devaim*). In regard to function, this is of course a liturgical poem and thus inevitably a religious one, but precisely what kind of experience is expressed in these lines? The poet naturally invokes God, Whose "deeds" in bringing about the change of the seasons are "so pleasant," but his accent falls decisively on the pleasantness of the created world. Indeed, in the first line of the Hebrew, he does not sing praises, which might suggest an explicit turning to God at the very beginning, but rather he utters song (*zemirot*), which aligns him more directly with the singing bird or nightingale (*zamir*) and places him in the great vernal chorus of nature. The poet responds to the sudden freshening of life and beauty in nature with an alertness of the senses that does not seem very different from, say, the famous opening lines of *The Canterbury Tales*, in which Chaucer celebrates the sweet showers of April and the movement of renewal they bring. I would not be so crass as to argue that what we have in these fifteen Hebrew lines is a secular poem in religious guise, but the poem does register a sense of the beauty of nature, including the elation of awakening physical desire, which one might say was not strictly required by the liturgical occasion.

There is, however, a further complication in the link between the status of these lines as liturgical poetry and as nature poetry. The central verses of the passage are virtually a pastiche of phrases from the Song of Songs. Now, the Song of Songs is read in synagogues on the Sabbath of Passover, and so there is a kind of association of liturgical occasions here, but I don't think that entirely explains the presence of the biblical material in the poem. Whatever its allegorical interpretations, the Song of Songs was—and has continued to be for the millennium and a half since the composition of this liturgical poem—the great luminous model for Hebrew love poetry and Hebrew poetry about spring. The images from the Song of Songs work here like those crumbs of Japanese paper Proust describes which, when immersed in water, magically stretch and take shape and color as flowers and people. The term pastiche I used a moment ago is a little misleading in its suggestion of inertness or mechanical activity, for what actually happens is that the biblical text springs to life again in the quickening medium of the poet's imagination, or to view the process from another angle, the Song of Songs serves as a powerful catalyst for the poet's imagination as he responds to the natural world around him. This is not in itself secular poetry, but it gives us a glimpse of the cultural matrix upon which, a few centuries later, an extraordinary tradition of Hebrew secular poetry would grow.

* Carmi's versions throughout are admirably fluent and precise. But following the pattern of the Penguin anthologies of foreign poetry, they are prose translations meant in the first instance to provide guidance to readers who can make out at least something of the original, and they do not pretend to suggest anything of the form or rhythm of the poems. Because my quotations here do not have the advantage of appearing, as does the English in the anthology itself, in columns of print parallel to the Hebrew, I have taken the liberty of arranging Carmi's prose versions in lines of verse, to give some faint indication of the shape of the poems.

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The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse includes several other spring liturgy poems from different periods that, like the text we have just considered, stand on the threshold of becoming celebratory nature poems. Another kind of ritual occasion, the marriage ceremony, provides the pious framework for a variety of love poems: after secular verse had taken root in Spain, some of these epithalamia would be frankly erotic and, in the subsequent Italian period, even bawdy. But in the liturgy proper, as Carmi's variegated selections tend to show, the poetic imagination addresses itself to a wide spectrum of topics, and for some of these the liturgical occasion seems less a justification than an excuse.

Let me offer one relatively unfamiliar example. Middle Eastern Jewry, beginning in the 10th century or perhaps a little earlier, developed a special commemoration of the death of Moses which was associated with the fall festival of Simhat Torah. Carmi includes several poetic laments composed for this rite. The most recent of these is a strophic poem, cast in the form of a dialogue between the weeping Jochebed and her son Moses, probably written in the 15th century, possibly by Samuel ben Moses Dayan of Aleppo. In the penultimate stanza, Jochebed takes final leave of her son: "Go then in peace, O you who pitched my tent!/ Your parting is a bitter thing for me, more bitter than any illness. / May the Lord bestow His peace upon you and also upon me./ May he listen to my bitter lament,/ and show His favor for your sake and for mine."

In a certain sense, this is more obviously a "religious" poem than the early Palestinian prayer for dew with its evocation of blossoming mandrakes and lovers' gardens. The subject, after all, is no less than the lawgiver of Israel, its liberator from Egyptian bondage, and the poem will actually conclude in the next stanza with a prayer for national redemption. One may nevertheless ask what these dramatized cries of a bereaved mother are doing in the liturgy for Simhat Torah. It goes without saying that the whole subject has no scriptural warrant, though the poet and his predecessors in this tradition had certain hints in the Midrash to draw from. The leading emphasis of the poem—perhaps in a sense its real subject—is neither Moses, the prophet of prophets, nor the redemption of Israel, but a mother's grief. The liturgical occasion and the biblical figures operate here in a manner roughly analogous to the iconography of the life of Jesus in Christian painting. That is, the iconography could be a vehicle for the devout representation of the central mystery of Christianity or it could serve as a means for the painter, using the traditional sacred figures, to explore visual and psychological themes of human existence like maternal beauty, childish innocence, suffering, compassion, bereavement. The various poems on the death of Moses, with their characteristic focus on the anguished mother, in fact look very much like a Jewish *pietà* convention, though not in any way inspired by Christianity, since it evolved in the Islamic sphere.

Such intermittent pulsations of secular or perhaps rather humanistic feeling in the midst of devout expression may help explain the astounding alacrity exhibited by one major segment of medieval Jewry in adopting the secular high culture of the Arabs. This adoption, at least in the realm of literature, occurred almost overnight sometime in the latter part of the 10th century when a brash young man from Fez named Dunash ben Labrat arrived in Córdoba by way of Baghdad, where he had served as secretary to the illustrious rabbinic philosopher and legal authority, Saadia Gaon, and began to write secular poems in Hebrew after Arabic models, using the Arabic meters and rhyme schemes as well as the Arabic generic conventions. Many Jews were shocked by Dunash's innovations, and some pious objections to the new movement would persist for generations, but the greatest poetic talents of Andalusian Jewry very quickly followed his path.

Here on Iberian soil, the rickety opposition between secular and religious collapses in another way, for the Hebrew poets who wrote exquisite nature poems, richly sensual erotic verse, boisterous drinking songs, and mordant satire, also produced sublime liturgical pieces—still following Arabic prosody—and personal religious poetry. The same figures who created such an exuberantly secular poetic corpus were also, variously, mystics, theologians, exegetes, talmudic authorities. Thus, Solomon ibn Gabirol, the tortured mystic whose neo-Platonic work, *Fons Vitae*, circulated in Latin translation for centuries among Christian religious thinkers, its Jewish authorship unknown, evokes an Andalusian garden at the beginning of the spring:

> With the ink of its showers and rains,
> with the quill of its lightning, with the hand of its clouds, winter
> wrote a letter upon the garden, in purple and blue.
> No artist could ever conceive the like of that.
> And this is why the earth, grown jealous of the sky,
> embroidered stars in the folds of the flowerbeds.

Or Judah Halevi, author of *The Kuzari*, the great medieval apologia for the Jewish faith, and also the supreme virtuoso of the Spanish Hebrew school, writes in a long lover's complaint to a coy mistress:

> Oh, after my death, let me still hear
> the sound of the golden bells on the hem of your skirt.
> And if you then ask how your beloved is, I, from the grave,
> will send you my love and my blessings!

And Abraham ibn Ezra, the famous biblical exe-

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gete and philologist who, arriving in Italy from his native Spain in the 12th century, singlehandedly Arabized its Hebrew poetics, as Dunash had done before him in Andalusia, writes of his own itinerant poverty with wry humor and candor:

I have a cloak that is like a sieve
to sift wheat or barley.
I spread it out like a tent in the dark of night,
and the stars shine through it;
through it I see the moon and the Pleiades,
and Orion flashing its light. . . .
If a fly landed on it with its full weight,
it would quickly regret its foolishness. . . .

The imaginative richness and variety of secular Hebrew poetry in Spain are familiar topics of celebration in the standard accounts of Jewish history. According to the most common notion, however, what occurred was a sudden sunburst of creativity in the 11th and 12th centuries—the period of the four commanding poets, Samuel Hanagid, Solomon ibn Gabirol, Moses ibn Ezra, and Judah Halevi—followed by a few after-glimmerings, then a general return to the norms of devotional ascesis and pious learning which prevailed in Jewish life until the seismic disruptions of modernity began to be felt in the 18th century. This view has remained entrenched because it allows one to think of the Hebrew Golden Age of Spain as an exception proving the comfortable stereotypical rule which defines pre-modern Jewry as a people of martyrs, scholars, and saints whose existence is everywhere pervaded by religiosity.

The untenability of such a view has been made evident by the recent scholarly work in Hebrew of Dan Pagis on the manifold continuations of the Hebrew secular tradition after the Spanish period, and Carmi, who gratefully acknowledges his debt to Pagis's researches, includes some impressive instances in his anthology of the lively persistence of secular verse well after the 12th century. Geographically, the movement that started in Andalusia spread to Christian Spain, Provence, Italy, North Africa, Greece, and Turkey, as far east as Yemen, as far north as Amsterdam. Chronologically, it constituted an unbroken tradition that ran on to the 18th century, where it overlapped with the Hebrew Enlightenment, which began in Germany as a much more self-conscious and ideological movement of secularization emulating Central European literary models. The poems and novels that roll off the presses in Tel Aviv today are not merely the consequence of the Zionist revival over the past half-century or more but are part of a thousand years of continuous secular literary activity in Hebrew—fully half the period since the destruction of the Second Temple.

It is, of course, important to keep in mind that Jews were doing much besides writing amorous and satiric verse during this second millennium of Diaspora existence. The flourishing of Hebrew poetry in Spain was almost contemporaneous with the development of *Hasidut Ashkenaz*, the mystical and ascetic pietistic movement that began in 12th-century Germany, and with the emergence of the Kabbalah in Spain itself. In the centuries that followed, Jewish cultural energies were frequently expressed in exegesis of both the Bible and the Talmud, in codes of law and in responsa, in devotional and mystical treatises, in movements like the Hasidism of Eastern Europe and the ascetic ethical regimen of *Musar* promulgated in many of the great East European talmudic academies.

All this pious activity can hardly be thought of as peripheral. From the 13th century on, the major thrust of Jewish imagination, its real profundity and originality, indisputably moved through these various religious channels; and even in the classic age of Spain in the 11th and 12th centuries, there were achievements in religious philosophy and mystical writing as forcefully imaginative as the great secular poems of the period and more comprehensive in scope. The best of this secular poetry in the Andalusian era is, I believe, on a par with the finest lyric poetry of the Western tradition, while Hebrew verse from the 13th to the 18th centuries, however lively and engaging, hardly has the same imaginative authority.

In any case, the abundance and vitality of secular literary activity in this period are historical facts to be reckoned with, and I suspect that prevailing ideas about the last several centuries of Jewish history would look rather different if they were not so centered in Ashkenazic Jewry. Jews in Central and Eastern Europe, especially in the last few centuries before modernity, lived by and large in enclaves, speaking their own language, not entirely sealed off from their Gentile surroundings but separated from them, one might say, by a semi-permeable membrance. In contrast, the Sephardic Jews of Spain and Italy, though by no means free of legal discrimination and the threat of persecution or even physical violence, lived in much freer interaction with their host cultures. The 800-year tradition of Hebrew literature they created bears witness above all to the positive genius for assimilation that has been one of the central mechanisms of Jewish existence through the ages.

This genius for assimilation, to invoke a famous distinction of the Hebrew essayist, Ahad Ha'am, was a matter of competitive rather than self-effacing imitation. The Hebrew of the Bible, Dunash and his followers argued, was an even more perfect instrument of literary expression than the Arabic of the Koran, and anything they could do, we could do better—which the great Hebrew poets after Dunash proceeded to accomplish, fashioning the most brilliant and at times luxuriant poems according to all the Arabic topical conventions, using the same kind of imagery as the Arabic, but in an elaborately wrought indigenous Hebrew

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drawing on two millennia of Jewish tradition. The Hebrew writers absorbed from their Arabic models not only forms and conventions but also—for these are never wholly separable—a certain sensibility, a certain way of seeing the world, an inclination to cultivate or even revel in certain kinds of experience. If the writing of love poems, both heterosexual and (in accordance with Arabic convention) homosexual, was generally a literary exercise rather than a confession of personal involvement, it nevertheless entailed an imaginative immersion in the experience expressed, so that "mere" exercise often shades into personal expression, the latter becoming unambiguous in the case of a poet like Todros Abulafia of 13th-century Toledo, who describes some of his actual mistresses in verse and wittily defends his weakness for Arab and Christian girls.

The same process of assimilation occurred again in Italy. It is an instructive curiosity of literary history that the first language after Italian in which sonnets were written was not French or Spanish or English but Hebrew—by Immanuel of Rome, who was composing sonnets before the end of the 13th century, within decades after the form was invented. The Hebrew poets of Italy wrote *ottava rima, terza rima,* sestinas, whatever seemed elegant or challenging or merely fashionable in Italian poetic practice; and beyond such matters of form, they absorbed the imaginative cast of the *dolce stil nuovo,* of ribald comedy, of the Italian baroque and neoclassical movements. Some of these poets, beginning with Immanuel, also wrote in Italian, or on occasion composed ingenious bilingual poems, but the continuing appeal for them of writing in Hebrew, which of course was not a spoken language, as an expression of their cultural identity as Jews, is remarkable.

At times their language could be quite mannered, but often one is struck by its vivid immediacy, its capacity to sound *as though* it were the actual vernacular of the poet. Thus Jacob Frances, in a poem written in Leghorn on the occasion of his brother's marriage in 1656, begins: "Leave off, you poetasters, leave off your singing!/ All your pens should be dragged along and flung on a dung heap!/ Pooh, pooh to you, pooh and a thousand poohs!" It is a little hard to believe that the third line, *pu, pu aleikhem, pu v'elef pu,* could have been written before the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language, but it shows how far the Hebrew poets were moved in their emulation of vernacular models to give their language the pungency and suppleness of a living tongue.

THE involvement of Jews in secular poetry is of course part of a broader pattern of involvement in secular cultural activities. Over this eight-century span from Spain to Italy, Jews were often at the forefront of medicine, mathematics, astronomy, diplomatic service. More popularly, individual Jews were dancing masters (one of the earliest Italian treatises on dance was written in Hebrew), musicians, actors, not to speak of gamblers, con men, or simple thieves. Leone Modena, who is represented in *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* by a single penitential poem for Yom Kippur, encapsulates in his own life this multifaceted involvement of Italian Jewry in general culture, high and low. Carmi's biographical note for Modena is as wonderful as any of the poems themselves in the anthology:

> Judah Aryeh [Leone] Modena (1571-1648) was born in Venice and studied under the poet-grammarian Samuel Archevolti in Padua. A child prodigy, he translated passages from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* at the age of twelve. He became famous as a rabbi and preacher in Venice and was the author of the first autobiography in Hebrew, *The Life of Judah.* In this unusually revealing narrative he lists twenty-six professions at which he tried his hand, among them: *maestro di cappella,* author of an Italian comedy, *dayan* [rabbinical judge], alchemist (his son died of lead poisoning after one of the experiments), writer of amulets and talismans, and matchmaker. He was addicted to gambling and, as a result, was perpetually on the verge of penury. At the request of the English Ambassador in Venice, he wrote *Historia de riti ebraici* for presentation to King James I. An avid polemicist, he wrote famous tracts against Christianity, Karaism, and the Kabbalah, and a condemnation of games of chance.

The astronomic distance between popular preconceptions and this real life of a 16th-century Venetian Jew is vividly illustrated by Jonathan Miller's appalling television production of *The Merchant of Venice,* recently shown in America on the PBS network. As many viewers objected, Miller and his leading man, Warren Mitchell (*né* Maisel), compounded the hostility of Shakespeare's characterization by divesting Shylock of whatever elements of dignity the playwright had given him, presenting the rapacious merchant with the Yiddish accent and the immigrant tics of a Jew in an anti-Semitic anecdote.

What is especially revealing is that Miller and Mitchell, in a televised conversation about their production, could say with a sense of complacent authority as Jews that Shakespeare had perfectly caught the historical character of Jewish culture in stressing Shylock's puritanical recoil from life and its pleasures, and that their own version brought to the fore the *sympathy* for the Jew which they perceived in the text of the play. Their self-deception on this last point is not so puzzling as it might first seem, for the anti-Semitic sterotype is in several respects only the reverse side of the modern sentimental stereotype of a traditional Jew. In both these perspectives, a Jew of Venice or Amsterdam or Barcelona would be imagined in the same terms facilely attributed to the Jew of Vilna or Bialystok: a dour, slightly stooped, wan figure, preferably with beard untrimmed, enveloped in a

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drab, shapeless caftan, exhibiting a certain tendency to draw back into the shadows at the sound of Gentile footsteps, his deep-set eyes, however, gleaming with a strangely intense light—for the anti-Semite, the glow of avarice; for the sentimentalist, the luminous vision of mystical realms beyond the shards and fragments of a world in exile. In contrast to Leone Modena's twenty-six professions, sacred and profane, this stereotypical Jew is allowed only the most limited occupational repertoire: for the anti-Semite, he is of course a moneylender, if not some more sinister conspirator against the property and life of innocent Christians; for the nostalgic philo-Semite, he is a rabbi, a sage, or perhaps a saintly beggar.

THE opposition between the highly variegated facts of history and just this sort of stereotype is exposed in a peculiar way by a very different kind of anthology of Jewish poetry, *Voices Within the Ark.** This bulky volume is subtitled "The Modern Jewish Poets," with an implicit emphasis on the definite article, for the editors, in a rage of inclusiveness, have tried to omit no one. Major figures like H. N. Bialik, Jacob Glatstein, and Paul Celan rub shoulders with poets who have never published a book of verse, and with some who did but might have done well not to. There are some fine poems here swimming among a sea of indifferent ones, but it is not easy for a reader to know how to navigate through all this abundance of selections. To the editors' credit, they have begun with substantial sections of Hebrew and Yiddish poetry—nearly a third of the volume. There follows a long section of English-language poets, almost half of the entire book, and the anthology concludes with a section devoted to "Other Languages" which, in keeping with the aspirations to comprehensiveness, includes Amharic, Turkish, Slovene, and Serbo-Croatian.

Now, when for the purposes of such an anthology, you select material from Hebrew and Yiddish, you are free simply to choose the poems you like best, for the Jewishness of the poetry is in a sense formally underwritten by the indigenous Jewish character of the language: an anthologist's selection of Yiddish or Hebrew verse need not be different in range or themes from a general anthology of French or German verse. In the English and Other Languages sections, however, of *Voices Within the Ark*, the editors, naturally enough, felt a certain obligation to choose poems that reflected the particularly Jewish concerns of the poets. The result is an instructive documentation of the constrained self-consciousness with which writers working outside a comprehensive Jewish cultural context imagine Jewish experience and strive to be Jewish.

There are a good many variations on explicitly biblical themes, which has been a perennial form of Jewish expression in many languages, including Hebrew; also, predictably, there are frequent poetic reflections on the mass murder of European Jewry. In the large middle ground between ancient text and modern catastrophe, one encounters a dense cluster of old rabbis, bearded Jews swaying in prayer shawls, flickering Sabbath candles, wailing walls, open Talmud folios, Torah scrolls, angular Hebrew letters floating through the air or tangled in burning bushes, à la Ben Shahn. One might well ponder the cultural contrast between the modern Jewish poets in many languages marshaling all these paraphernalia of sanctity and the Hebrew poets of Spain, Italy, Greece, and Yemen in Carmi's anthology who write of spring gardens, breasts that invite caresses, the pleasures of drinking, the misery of old whores, the evils of patronage, the squalor of prison, the boisterousness of common inns, claiming as their natural right of experience everything from humble cabbages to the grandeur of kings.

LET me offer one last example from *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* as an illustration of the lively variety of pre-modern Jewish culture, the vigor with which a secular sensibility could flourish in the heart of an officially religious society, and through the means of the Holy Tongue. The poet in question is Immanuel Frances (1618-c.1710), the younger brother of Jacob Frances and his collaborator on many literary projects. Frances was not so extreme a conjunction of sacred and profane as Leone Modena, but like many Italian and Spanish Jews, he did some remarkable shuttling between the two. During the latter part of his long life, he served as a rabbi in Florence and was a respected authority on talmudic law. At the time of the Sabbatian upheaval of 1666, he was a trenchant opponent of the pseudo-messiah and composed an anti-Sabbatian polemic in Hebrew with his brother. In all these regards, Immanuel Frances was certainly a pillar of the traditional community. He wrote liturgical poetry and also recitative religious works commissioned by musical societies. He also wrote Hebrew love poems after Italian generic models, and composed a treatise on poetics. Here is one of his love sonnets (in this one instance, I shall offer my own verse translation, reproducing the Petrarchan form of the original):

When Hannah I behold in shining light,
When I recall Naomi, passing fair—
My heart for Hannah leaps like flames in air,
Naomi makes my soul burn fire-bright.

Between two stools I fall in luckless plight:
Today it's Hannah's sovereignty I bear,
Before, Naomi was my constant care.
O, Love, where may I flee your searching sight?

Alas, as iron does on iron hone,

* Edited by Howard Schwartz and Anthony Rudolf, Avon Books, 1210 pp., $14.95.

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Desire upon desire whets its edge,
And so my thoughts from panic take their tone.

I beg you, Love, from fortune's narrow ledge:
O, grant me two hearts here instead of one,
Or split my heart in two with your swift wedge.

Although the language of this whole tradition of Hebrew poetry is often highly allusive, this particular sonnet is not much concerned with the echoes of classical Hebrew texts; what it does instead is to use the standard poetic vocabulary of amatory experience that goes back to 10th-century Spain in order to render in Hebrew a highly Italianate witty version of a lover's dilemma. There are just two readily identifiable allusions in the poem. One, in the first line of the sestet, would seem chiefly to be the idiomatic use of a well-known biblical image of strife ("As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens his fellow" [Proverbs 27:17]), which is extended in the next line into a poetic conceit on the psychology of passion. The other allusion, in the last line of the octave, is to a famous expression of spiritual anguish ("Where may I escape Your spirit and where may I flee Your presence?" [Psalms 139:7]), and might conceivably be construed as blasphemous since God is replaced by omnipresent Love, to whom the poet will turn in prayer in the concluding tercet.

IN REGARD to the larger historical reality reflected by such texts, what is most interesting is where to locate this poem in the experience of Immanuel Frances, rabbi, talmudist, and religious polemicist. It would obviously be naive to assume that the sonnet was literally autobiographical, that the good rabbi of Florence was really torn between an irreconcilable passion for a certain Hannah and a certain Naomi. (The names themselves look suspiciously like conventional literary devices, suggesting, respectively, grace and sweetness.) But I think it is almost as naive to assume, as some scholars have done, that poems like this are purely formal exercises with no experiential roots in the life of the poet. The act of creating poetry is hardly ever so exclusively cerebral. At the very least, the experience rendered in the poem was attractive enough to the poet for him to etch it in fourteen lines of carefully wrought verse, which means entering imaginatively into the fluctuations of fickleness and conflicting desire, and in the concluding conceit, the contemplation of a prospect of bigamous bliss contrary to the single-hearted condition of the human animal.

Was Immanuel Frances, rabbi of Florence, a pagan *à ses heures* when he, or at any rate a speaker he invented, turned to omnipresent Love in prayer? In a limited sense, yes, to the extent that he discovered in the literary convention of entreating the deity Love something attuned to what we undergo as human beings that was worth expressing, and that could not be expressed so sharply in strictly monotheistic terms. But the chief point about the sonnet, and about much of the body of Hebrew poetry with which it is linked, is that it is an act of playfulness.

PLAYFULNESS is not a quality much brought to mind in prevalent conceptions of pre-modern Jewry, featuring as they do an exalted but limited cast of mystic sages and tormented talmudists, but it is vibrantly evident in a major current of the last millennium of Jewish cultural history. It is our modern tendency to view Judaism as relentlessly imperative and generally problematic besides, but there is good evidence that many of our ancestors assumed it to be neither. Immanuel Frances was clearly not calling his faith into question in poetically imploring Love to help him solve his problems with Hannah and Naomi, but he may well have assumed that the context of faith was comprehensive yet not exactly pervasive, that one could be relaxed enough as a religious Jew to explore aesthetic and emotional experiences pleasurable in their own right which had nothing to do with precept and creed.

Such exploration does not make the poet a secularist but it is itself essentially secular. This recurrent élan of secular feeling in the midst of religious tradition, using the very language of tradition, is worth pondering. It suggests that Jewish experience before the modern era was more various, and even more paradoxical, than we are accustomed to think.

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Singing Wolf

Samuel Lipman

LIKE so many other forms of serious music, the German *Lied* —a musical setting of a short poem, often about love or suffering and their various combinations—can now be seen as having a completed history. Originating in the tentative, if touching, efforts of Mozart and Beethoven, the *Lied* as we know it found its first full artistic expression and its greatest fame in Schubert's unsurpassed outpouring of pure melody. The works of Schumann and Brahms, though distinguished and beautiful, neither rivaled Schubert's lyricism nor occupied as central a place in each composer's *oeuvre*, and by the time of even such a master as Richard Strauss, the *Lied* seemed to display restrospection and nostalgia rather than its original freshness.

For all these composers the beginning was not the word, but the melody. The greatness of their songs was in the music and was often unrelated either for better or worse to the value of the words being set. There was, however, one 19th-century composer of whom this was not the case. For Hugo Wolf, in the beginning was the poem, and the poem dictated its own treatment. The result was a music different for each poet and for each song. The transcendence which was achieved—as it must be in all successful works of art of mixed origins—was not of the poetry but of the music. At their greatest Wolf's songs are poems enriched and writ large.

THE gods who are thought to grant happiness scattered as little of it on Hugo Wolf as they did on any other major musical figure of the Romantic era. He was born in 1860 in Windischgraz—a small bastion of German culture then part of Austria but now in Yugoslavia—the son of an impecunious petit-bourgeois family. His leather-merchant father was something of an amateur musician, and he saw to it that his son received music lessons. The boy, though obviously gifted, was hardly a prodigy, and nothing suggested that he possessed preternatural ability. Indeed, the young Wolf was expelled from the Vienna Conservatory on a (presumably unfounded) charge that he had threatened the life of its director. He did contrive a personal contact with Richard Wagner, who was at the time taking Viennese musical life—or at least that part of it not committed to his great rival and antagonist Brahms —by storm. But Wagner put Wolf off with personal kindness and an evident lack of musical interest.

The elder Wolf was clearly in no position to do more than send his son the barest minimum of financial support; even this insufficiency was accompanied by doleful letters which now, a century later, still seem heartrending. Yet during this period of poverty and ignominy, a peculiar combination of musical talent, nervous intensity, heightened enthusiasm, and self-absorption brought the budding composer a small but devoted circle of friends and patrons. Together they found him a few piano pupils, in whom Wolf took only a desultory interest. More helpful to his income was the interest of the Köchert family, court jewelers in Vienna and important advertisers in a prominent local society weekly.

That paper, needing a music critic, was induced to try Wolf. For three years he thus joined the ranks of such composer-critics as Berlioz and Debussy. What his criticism lacked in breadth and objectivity —he was by now a confirmed member of the anti-Brahms faction—it made up in Wagnerian fire and brimstone. Not surprisingly, the enemies he made in his writing continued to oppose him and his music for the rest of his life.

As a composer, his career was starting to assume its lifelong character of small successes and large failures. He had a burning desire to write for a large orchestra, and his main effort along this line was a symphonic poem (1883-85), titled after Heinrich von Kleist's *Penthesilea*. Its preliminary reading by the Vienna Philharmonic, which Wolf had reason to hope would end in a performance, instead resulted in public embarrassment and rejection. His incidental music to Ibsen's *The Feast at Solhaug* (1890-91), performed under unsatisfactory circumstances, fizzled. And his lifelong search for a viable opera libretto, though it produced *Der Corregidor* (1895), a setting of Alarcón's *The Three-Cornered Hat*, brought him neither the fame nor the profit of which he had dreamed.

The fate of his songs was, on the whole, happier. Thanks to the efforts of his friends and also two powerful Wagner Clubs, then flourishing in Austria and Germany, the songs began to be performed even during his short lifetime. He wrote them in spurts, long fallow periods being followed by intense creative activity. By the time he died in 1903, he had composed close to three hundred songs, almost all of them to good poetry and some, indeed, to the greatest masterpieces of German literature.

IN 1888 Wolf set 53 poems of the then little-known Eduard Mörike; these appeared the next year, along with settings of twenty poems by Joseph von Eichendorff. Fifty-one Goethe settings were published in 1890, followed by the

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44 songs of the *Spanisches Liederbuch*, written to poems and folksongs translated from the Spanish by Emanuel Geibel and Paul Heyse. The same year he started the *Italienisches Liederbuch*, settings of Heyse's translations of short Italian lyrics. He finished 22 of these by 1891 and another 24 in 1896. His last three works were written in 1897 to poems by Michelangelo. The title of the second of these, *Alles endet, was entstehet* ("All Things Created Come to Dust"), serves fittingly to express not only the despair which marked so much of Wolf's life but also the wisdom he was able to extract from his suffering.

This suffering was at once physical and mental. What could only be hinted at in Ernest Newman's 1907 biography was made fully clear in Frank Walker's 1951 extended study: Wolf's death was due to syphilis marked, in its final form, by six years of insanity and progressive paralysis.

The circumstances of venereal infection are hardly the ordinary stuff of music criticism. Yet Wolf's case is of great interest to students of both music and *fin-de-siècle* culture. Such evidence as we have about how Wolf contracted syphilis comes from the writings of Alma Mahler, the composer's widow. Alma Mahler is not always reliable, but what she says about the matter in the 1940 edition of her reminiscences has special force because Mahler had been a fellow student of Wolf at the Conservatory, shared an apartment with him, disagreed with him on an abortive opera project, and then became a major character in his psychotic fantasies. According to Alma:

> Hugo Wolf as a very young man was taken by Adalbert von Goldschmidt into the so-called *Lehmgrube* (a brothel) where Goldschmidt played dance music, for which he received each time a young woman without charge. He presented his honorarium once to his friend Wolf, and Wolf took away with him "the wound that will never heal."

Whether or not this lurid anecdote is literally true, it has the ring of symbolic truth. The dark side of the Romantic era was an obsessive concern with disease and death, and in particular with tuberculosis and syphilis, both of which were believed to have some connection with creativity. Among musicians Chopin, with his pallor and evident physical weakness, was the very model of the consumptive artist. Schubert and Schumann—and even Beethoven—were widely thought to belong to the ranks of the syphilitic.

The idea that sensual indulgence brings both the punishment of insanity and demonic insight survived into the 20th century with Brunold Springer's *Die genialen Syphilitiker* ("The Inspired Syphilitics," among whom he of course includes Nietzsche, but also Woodrow Wilson and Mussolini). Indeed, Thomas Mann's great novel *Doctor Faustus* is about just such a diseased composer; significantly, Mann uses material from the life and letters of Wolf to flesh out the figure of his own fictional Leverkühn.

THE relationship between an artist's life and his work is never easy to understand. In Wolf's particular case the facts of his biography have had a strong influence on how his art has been perceived and performed. The morbid psychological pathology and physical disease from which he suffered have served both as a key to the understanding of his art and, perhaps, as a bar to a surer appreciation of his achievement.

To see why, we must first examine the breadth and depth of Wolf's musical output. At an initial glance, these hundreds of short vocal compositions, all save one performed with piano rather than orchestral accompaniment, express a wide range of human emotions and make significantly varied demands on both performers and listeners. There are, in Wolf, simple songs and charming ones, light pieces and witty conceits. Some songs take an Olympian view of the universe and some indulge in a kind of publicly proclaimed emotion verging on what can only be called bathos.

As pure music—melody, harmony, and rhythm considered without any reference to the text—Wolf's songs seem highly competent without at the same time possessing immortal distinction. The overall musical impression is of melodic shortwindedness, of tunes which begin promisingly and lack either continuation or conclusion, of brief motives reiterated countless times. Thus unlike the great songs of Schubert—among them the *Erlkönig*, *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, and *Ungeduld*—which have been widely played in beloved piano transcriptions, the songs of Wolf are unknown in any other than their original, vocal, form.

But to treat Wolf's songs as pure music is to miss the core of his achievement. That achievement—based technically on the careful and felicitous matching of word to note—was the projection of text and music as a unity, a unity in which the text, not the music, was *primus inter pares*. Had his music been, by itself, more memorable, that unity would have suffered; had his melodies, carried by a consistent and distinctive style, been able to survive in our collective musical consciousness, his name would have been vastly more famous, and his achievement less remarkable. For it is the very plainness of his music that enables the words to be heard not only as the vowels and consonants necessary to clothe the vocal line, but also as the bearers of detailed and connected meaning.

According to current received opinion, whatever emotion Wolf expressed he caught deep and whole. Such an attribution of universality seems unfounded. A coy note of preciosity is often present in the smaller songs; Wolf's treatment of love and passion seems all too stylized, all too dependent upon the artificial elements of jealousy and scorn associated in the popular mind with Mediterranean forms of courtship. Where Wolf's greatness cannot be questioned, however, is in his many settings of poems which deal with human suffering, the urge for deliverance, and man's drive to be as a god himself.

At the head of these stand the *Harfenspieler-Lieder*, settings of the verse in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* given to the pathetic old harp player. The three songs—*Wer*

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sich der Einsamkeit ergibt ("He Who Gives Himself to Solitude"), *An die Thüren will ich schleichen* ("To the Doors Will I Creep"), and *Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass* ("He Who Has Never Eaten His Bread with Tears") are adequately summed up in Carlyle's free rendering of the final poem:

Who never ate his bread in sorrow,
Who never spent the darksome hours
Weeping and watching for the morrow,
He knows ye not, ye gloomy powers.
To earth, this weary earth, ye bring us,
To guilt ye let us heedless go,
Then leave repentance fierce to wring us;
A moment's guilt, an age of woe!

Wolf's music to these gloomy words serves as frame and background, support and wrapping. Though the content is the poet's, the total effect is heightened and made permanent as much by the music's restraint as by its presence.

Wolf's directly religious songs are concerned with the figure of Christ as evoked by the two powerful images of birth and crucifixion. The songs describing the infant Jesus are immensely appealing, whether the words being set are from the Spanish Songbook or from Mörike. Here the simplicity of the music evokes something of the simplicity of childhood, and the attitude of the composer is one of rapt wonder.

Gripping indeed is his larger-scaled treatment of verse describing Christ as the comforter. In *Herr, was trägt der Boden hier* ("Lord What Will the Soil Bring Forth"), one of Wolf's most starkly powerful songs, the poem from the Spanish asks whether the fate of the sinner is thorns; it ends with Christ taking the thorns and giving the sinner flowers in their place. Here the music is stark and sometimes brutal; the same simplicity which for Wolf enhances a childlike religiosity now emphasizes human nakedness before God.

PERHAPS the two greatest songs Wolf ever wrote—settings of Goethe's masterpieces *Ganymed* and *Prometheus*—are both about man's arrogance in thinking himself divine, and the punishment for such *hubris*. In *Ganymed*, Goethe describes the unashamed love of a beautiful youth for Zeus, and Wolf's repetitious, almost monotonous, chromaticism achieves an ineffable ecstasy by its very incessance.

Ganymed is, of course, about a quasi-human love. By contrast, *Prometheus* deals with a Titan's defiance of Zeus himself. Goethe's poem describes in symbolic terms man's grudge against heaven and ends with a pledge of eternal defiance regardless of the penalty. To clothe these words Wolf has written a dramatic scene resembling in all ways but one Wagner's very similar treatment in the *Ring* of Wotan. In Wolf's song—brilliantly orchestrated by the composer and thus capable of even greater impact than in the original piano version—all Wagner's gestures of fist-shaking and thunderclaps are present; only lacking is the independent power of the music which incorporated Wagner's metaphysical flights, profound and windy alike. As he consistently does, Wolf finds motives which he states in the piano (or the orchestra), and arrays these short groups of notes against the declamatory line in the voice. The total result is again the triumph of the poetry, a triumph which the music supports and perhaps even makes possible, but hardly shares. Here as elsewhere in Wolf there is a kind of denial, at once extended both to the audience and to himself. It is as if the composer, in his greatest songs, were reminding his listeners that they had not come to him for pleasure.

THE singing of Wolf has always been a great specialty, a gift possessed by few. In Schubert, the demands are simple, albeit difficult to satisfy: a beautiful voice, musical phrasing, and a talent on the part of the singer for ingratiating himself with the audience. In Wolf, on the other hand, the problems to be solved and the talents needed belong to the domain of the speaker—and possibly even to that of the sage.

While a few of Wolf's songs have always found their way into *Lieder* recitals, they have mainly been heard through phonograph recordings made by those dedicated to this *recherché* art. Indeed, Wolf's reputation today is largely due to the pioneering efforts, extending throughout the 1930's, of the late Walter Legge, the English record producer who was responsible for getting His Master's Voice to record large chunks of the then unrecorded musical repertory. Legge also developed the concept of selling records through subscriptions pledged in advance, rather than through the more normal method of over-the-counter purchase. The most successful of these ventures were the Schnabel performances of the complete Beethoven Piano Sonatas and the Glyndebourne recordings of Mozart operas.

Already by 1931 Legge had put forward the idea of a Hugo Wolf Society, to record (on 78 RPM discs) large numbers of the songs, most of them still unknown and certainly unrecorded. He received powerful public help from Ernest Newman, not only a Wolf biographer but also one of the most prestigious English music critics of the day. (To make his scheme commercially viable, Legge needed only 500 subscribers; though they were slow coming in, he was able to go ahead with a scant 470.)

The singers Legge garnered for his records were among the leading—and also the most intelligent—*Lieder* interpreters of the period. Almost all of them were either German or German-speaking. They included the historic figure Elena Gerhardt, who had recorded some *Lieder* as early as the first decade of the century with the great conductor Artur Nikisch at the piano. Gerhardt did the first album of the six which ultimately appeared. She was followed by such important singers as Herbert Janssen (a Wagnerian baritone with a distinguished career at Bayreuth and later, after Hitler, at the Metropolitan), and the tenor Karl Erb. Another historic figure included in the project by Legge was Elisabeth Rethberg, the creator of the title role in Strauss's *Die ägyptische Helena* (1928). Still another was

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the Russian-Jewish bass Alexander Kipnis, a unique artist with a rock-solid voice and a radiant musical intelligence. Legge also arranged the participation for one song only—*Prometheus*—of the great Wagnerian bass Friedrich Schorr (famous for his portrayals of Hans Sachs and Wotan). An equally important catch for two songs—including *Ganymed*—was the celebrated Irish tenor John McCormack.

While the other artists participating in the Wolf Society records may not be on quite this distinguished level, the whole set has stood up amazingly well, and fully deserves the honor of its recent LP transfer and reissue in England.* In this reissue, the original six 78 RPM albums, each now with an LP record to itself, have been joined by a seventh LP composed mostly of performances unissued upon the outbreak of war in 1939.

The importance of Walter Legge in establishing the songs of Hugo Wolf hardly ends here. He continued his work for EMI, the parent company of HMV, after the war, now producing records also for Columbia (England), another branch of the conglomerate. Here, in addition to sponsoring the international career of the conductor Herbert von Karajan, he oversaw the work on records of the then young soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, whom he later married. In his capacity first as record producer and finally as husband, he not only supervised her career but also formed her vocal and musical personality.

Just how he went about being a musical Svengali (the term is Schwarzkopf's own) is clear from an article he wrote about his wife:

> First I set out to widen by recorded examples her imaginative concept of the possibilities of vocal sound. Rosa Ponselle's vintage port and thick cream timbre and noble line; the Slavic brilliance of Nina Koshetz; a few phrases from Farrar's Carmen . . . one word only from Melba . . . some Rethberg and large doses of Meta Seinemeyer to show how essentially Teutonic voices can produce brilliant Italianate sound. Then Lehmann's all-embracing generosity, Schumann's charm and lightness, McCormack's incredible octave leap in *"Care Selve,"* Frida Leider's dramatic tension. . . . From the analysis of what we found most admirable in these diverse models we made our own synthesis. . . .†

The result of all this picking and choosing in the cafeteria of vocal success was Schwarzkopf's career, fabled not only in opera and recorded operetta, but also in *Lieder*.

Of the work of Hugo Wolf in particular she has made numerous recordings, including a two-record set of the Goethe songs with pianist Gerald Moore, and one record, from the 1953 Salzburg Festival, with Wilhelm Furtwängler as keyboard partner. A famous vocal colleague on her Wolf records has been the German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau; with him she has recorded the complete Italian and Spanish Songbooks, dividing the individual songs according to their appropriateness for a specific vocal gender. Together, they have Legge's imprimatur: they are, for him, "Wolf's greatest living interpreters."

Fischer-Dieskau is himself the most recorded singer of Wolf—and for that matter of almost everything else—to emerge since 1945. His discs are numberless, and it appears to be his conscious ambition to record every serious work, whether classical, Romantic, or contemporary, which can be sung by the male voice. Of Wolf alone he has recorded (in addition to those with Schwarzkopf) three sets of three records each with Daniel Barenboim at the piano for Deutsche Grammophon; on HMV there is a seven-LP set with Gerald Moore.

If Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau may be taken as the new wave of Wolf singing, and the Wolf Society recordings as the older tradition, what can be said about the character of each approach? And just as important, what can the answer to this question tell us about the course of vocal and musical performance in this refined part of the repertory during the last half-century?

IN LISTENING to all these records, it immediately becomes evident that the older and newer styles, despite their both being linked by the figure of Walter Legge, are quite different.

The best of the older performances give an impression of simplicity combined with grandeur, of sensitivity to each poem's mood combined with a clear, unforced, and restrained projection of the individual words. Among countless examples must be mentioned Gerhardt's searing cry on the first word of *Herr, was trägt der Boden hier*, a cry all the more terrifying for the self-control guarding its expression. Similarly, Schorr's performance of *Prometheus* manages always to be sung rather than barked—even during the moments of the poem's greatest stress. John McCormack's *Ganymed* is neither effeminate nor sentimental, neither cloying nor piteous; even the final astounding falsetto slide upward on the word "father" never loses either the integrity of the character or the detachment with which Goethe could view the extremities of feeling. In Herbert Janssen's singing of the overtly Christological *Schlafendes Jesuskind* and *Auf ein Altes Bild*, the straightforward character of both poetry and music is never sacrificed for momentary effects of dramatic virtuosity. And the same holds true in the *Harfenspieler-Lieder*, where Janssen expresses utter desolation without any show of special pleading.

To go from this to Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau is to leave an atmosphere of what now seem like classical limits and to enter a world of blossoming details, of an infinite series of dramatic takes dwarfing their wider contexts, of feeling chosen over understanding, of turns of phrase emphasized at the expense of the orderly progression of the poetic idea. Here, it seems fair to say, is a vulgar rather than a refined art.

In the case of Schwarzkopf, it is difficult not to feel that, in this repertory, she is simply overmatched as an artist. However magnetic her stage personality may have been in opera and on the concert platform, the evidence of these re-

* His Master's Voice (England) RLS 759.

† *Opera* (England), April 1976.

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cordings is that she has little to bring to the performance of the most profound works of Wolf other than a coyness more at home in *Der Rosenkavalier* and a crooning more suitable for the singing of lullabies. And even there, in *Wiegenlied in Sommer* ("Summer Lullaby"), one of Wolf's best non-weighty songs, her preciosity destroys the necessary feeling of tenderness so marvelously conveyed by Tiana Lemnitz in the Society recording.

Elsewhere, where the great emotional chips are down, Schwarzkopf proves entirely inadequate. In her performance of *Anakreons Grab* ("Anacreon's Grave"), a setting of Goethe's poem about the final, protected resting place of the Greek poet, vocal imitations of turtledoves cooing and grasshoppers jumping only detract from the idea of a divine reward for one fortunate artist. In *Schlafendes Jesuskind*, what is for Janssen a picture of wonderment becomes for Schwarzkopf merely another lullaby. Her *Herr, was trägt der Boden hier* communicates, instead of Gerhardt's nobility under suffering, nervousness and self-pity. *Ganymed*, under Schwarzkopf's ministrations, fares as badly; the beautiful, doomed youth of Goethe's poem emerges rather as a sophisticated lady quite conscious of her own attractiveness.

With Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, we face an artist at once more penetrating and more troubling. By no means as vocally gifted as Schwarzkopf—or as most of the singers on the Wolf Society discs—he has made a career out of substituting guileful thought for physical strength. It is an important part of his achievement that when he sings, no word goes unillustrated by a twist of vocal color, dynamics, or phrasing; it is as if he had developed some special gift for musical onomatopoeia, enabling him to act out the words rather than merely deliver them.

The effect of all this artfulness is an overwrought absorption in the material. Everything seems to verge on the hysterical, an impression unavoidably heightened by Fischer-Dieskau's lack of vocal amplitude which frequently—and in *Prometheus* unpleasantly—reduces him to a mere shout. In quieter moments, he too, like Schwarzkopf, croons; indeed, both singers often seem all too aware of the potential of the microphone as an aid to vocal color and contrast.

Fischer-Dieskau's recordings of the *Harfenspieler-Lieder* are, it must be said, attractive on first hearing. Together with pianist Barenboim, he projects a concern with each note and each word; here, one feels, are performers who really care. Compared to Fischer-Dieskau and Barenboim, Janssen and his pianist, Coenraad Bos, seem at first—but only at first—a bit cautious and unbending. Then, as the second song follows the first, and the third the second, the plenitude of Fischer-Dieskau's emotion becomes a surfeit, and Janssen's restraint can be experienced as a form of wisdom.

In other songs, too, the contrast is unfavorable to the younger singer. In *Anakreons Grab*, Fischer-Dieskau seems uncertain as to whether he is expressing Goethe's view of life or singing about the dissolute minor poet of the title; *Ganymed* is tortured and mannered, verging occasionally on rhythmic unsteadiness; *Auch kleine Dinge* ("Even Little Things"), another of Wolf's most successful lighter songs, is done in the stylized manner of the best cabaret singers with no trace of the gentility which marks the performance of Gerhardt.

SUCH a negative judgment of perhaps the two most highly regarded German singers of the post-World War II era cannot fail to provoke objections in general and a particular question concerning their performance of Wolf. How can anything vital be lacking in artists who have sung Wolf's songs in concert or on records so successfully to an audience vastly larger than any who heard this music in the preceding fifty years?

The answer, I believe, is that a basic constituent in the success of these artists in this repertory is precisely the flaws in their approach to it—the charming shallowness of Schwarzkopf and the overwrought, fussy delivery of Fischer-Dieskau.

Describing Hugo Wolf's audience, Walter Legge himself has written:

> Nowhere today is there a society like that Wolf moved in. His Vienna circle was a mixture of up-and-coming conductors, writers, doctors, university professors, government officials, and fairly rich business people all interested in the arts—particularly music—and nearly all of them capable amateur performers.

It goes without saying that this audience was German-speaking, not only able to understand the words being sung and the musical idiom in which the songs were written, but also alive to the literary nuances and context of the poetry Wolf was setting.

In important ways this enclosed cultural milieu lasted well into our century. But the past 35 years have seen the rise of a new kind of audience for high culture—wider, thinner, less knowledgeable, less discriminating. To please such an audience performers must become more approachable and more immediately comprehensible. Legge himself admits as much in speaking of Schwarzkopf (though he draws a different conclusion):

> At performances I sat whenever possible in a stage box to watch both what she was doing and how the audience reacted—the exact moment when women fumbled in their handbags for handkerchiefs and men tugged them from their breast pockets. This is *not* calculation; it is in my view obedience to composers' intentions, to involve the audience in the action.

With Schwarzkopf, this emphasis on manipulating the audience's emotions results in the charm and coquetry that mar her performances of Wolf. With Fischer-Dieskau, a more intelligent performer in command of great histrionic gifts, playing to the audience has involved fastening on the one part of Wolf's art that is most readily accessible to the contemporary listener—the pathology which so marked the composer as a man. But the hysteria and instability that Fischer-Dieskau thus communicates is not all, or even the best part, of what Hugo Wolf's art is about. At their greatest, Wolf's songs are about the victory of

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Wolf as an artist over his madness as a man, not about his capture by it. Wolf is so important because in some obscure way—made even more enigmatic by the sparse nature of his music—he sublimated his madness in his songs, just as he sublimated his despair, his suffering, and his hope. This miracle produced, in the end, a detached wisdom, gloriously exemplified in the Michelangelo *Lieder*.

Kipnis on the Society records could communicate this spirit because he had confidence in the ability of his audience to understand and appreciate it. Fischer-Dieskau lacks such an audience and such confidence, and therefore his art is lacking as well.

Movies

A Soviet "New Wave"?

Richard Grenier

THE prodigious achievements of 19th-century Russian literature were all made in the shadow of the Czarist censor—and were freighted with incomparably greater meaning precisely because press censorship made fictional stories the only vehicle for expressing certain social and political ideas. We are now being told that, in the shadow of the Soviet censor, Russia has recently been producing nothing less than a Soviet "New Wave" in the cinema, the most conspicuous examples of which to have reached our shores are *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears,* which won the latest U.S. Academy Award for the best foreign-language movie of the year (over works by François Truffaut and Akira Kurosawa), and *Oblomov,* a screen version of the celebrated Russian novel by Ivan Goncharov, a film that has received more serious attention here than any Russian film in a long time.

In the Soviet canon, of course, the state, at any given moment, is perfect, and, since in accordance with Communist doctrine the party penetrates and controls all other institutions in society, all these other institutions must be perfect as well. Faced with the inflexible requirement of presenting the state and its integral economic and social systems as unflawed perfection, the author of a modern Soviet film or novel dealing with contemporary life has little left open to him but to exhort the individual to live up to all this perfection he sees spread out about him. Only someone who has seen dozens upon dozens of conventional, "serious" Soviet movies, or read dozens of their literary counterparts, can know the bottomless, dismal depths to which such grim, hypocritical strictures can reduce artistic talent. Soviet cultural authorities have been concerned for decades with the obvious difficulty their system has in producing quality works of fiction, and the most prevalent theory has been that it is an unfortunate by-product of achieving a "classless" society, which eliminates fundamental antagonisms—their system, in a sense, being perhaps too perfect. I have heard less of this theory in recent years, and, perhaps accidentally, not a word of it since the start of the troubles in Poland.

Some exceptions to the Soviet rule, however, are notable. A handful of survivors of the artistically liberal days of the 20's were allowed to continue, the most conspicuous example being Sergei Eisenstein, who made two unquestioned masterpieces, *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible,* even under High Stalinism (although the release of Part II of *Ivan* was delayed fifteen years until after Stalin's death). A minor but curious exception has been the regionalist cinema allowed to develop in Stalin's native Georgia, almost as if it were beyond the territorial frontiers of the Soviet Union. This cinema is droll, ironic, personal, non-didactic, something like early Milos Forman and very early Fellini. The only explanation I can offer for its existence is that Great Russians are for some mysterious reason entertained by culturally autonomous Georgians, whom they tend to view as a nation of scalawags and black marketeers. Proud monuments to Stalin were allowed to remain standing in Georgia while de-Stalinization was at its

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height. "We call them 'blacks,'" a Soviet official once told me cheerfully in Leningrad.

But the most significant exception to the depressing level of most Soviet cinema has been Russian screen adaptations of the "classics." The Russians have done magnificent productions of *Othello, Hamlet, King Lear, Don Quixote*, and of course their own classics, Pushkin, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Chekhov (*The Lady With the Dog, The Grasshopper, Uncle Vanya*), Andreyev, Gorky. *Oblomov* is not only the most recent, but also one of the most interesting of these screen adaptations—in my view the most remarkable film to have come out of Russia in some years.

The Soviet attitude toward adapting an acknowledged masterpiece of literature offers an ironic contrast to Hollywood, where the received wisdom is that a great novel or play not only offers no guarantee of translating into a great movie, but almost constitutes a liability, hanging like an albatross around the neck of the poor film-maker. At Mosfilm and Lenfilm the perception could not be more different. On the one hand the director has for material modern, state-inspired drivel, on the other a *classic*, safety, security. Those who do not know the Soviet Union often do not realize the almost Victorian respect that the regime—its barbarities notwithstanding—pays to genteel culture. A Soviet censor will rewrite history, but he will not rewrite Tolstoy. It is a Soviet idiosyncracy.

EXCEPT for the above categories (old-timers, Georgians, and adaptations of the classics), Soviet films to merit any serious attention at all have been as scarce as Kohinoor-size diamonds, freak works that somehow slipped through the net. I will mention only one, *Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors*, which, made in 1964, played to immense critical acclaim in France in the late 60's but has not been released commercially in the United States. Set in Bukovina, an isolated Carpathian mountain region split between northern Rumania and the Soviet Ukraine, the film is informed with a deep poetic vision and has something of the mood of 17th-century Scottish border ballads. Using to stunning effect what may be the most evocative folk costumes, architecture, and music in all the Balkans, *Ancestors* is a tale of "dark and bloody ground," brooding, fatalistic, with a feeling of inescapable destiny not unlike that of Greek tragedy. A more un-Soviet film would be hard to find. Its author, Sergei Paradjanov, is widely considered in the West to be the greatest film-maker produced by the Soviet Union since the death of Sergei Eisenstein.

Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors had been made in the Ukrainian part of Bukovina, in a Ukrainian mountain dialect called Hutzul. Paradjanov operated out of Kiev. His son went to a Ukrainian school. And when he refused to dub another Ukrainian film into Russian, he found himself arrested on charges of being a Ukrainian nationalist. The situation was not without its oddity in that this defender of Ukrainian culture and language, although he spoke Ukrainian (and of course Russian), was not Ukrainian at all but had been born and brought up in Tbilisi (Tiflis) in Soviet Georgia. And further to complicate matters, although he spoke perfect Georgian, he was of Armenian descent, spoke Armenian also, and appeared to consider himself an Armenian, talking of the "greatness and strength there is in the ancient Armenian nation." All his new film projects dealt with Armenia. Released by the authorities in Kiev, Paradjanov made in 1969, for Armenfilm, *The Color of Pomegranates*, an untitled print of which was shown at the most recent New York Film Festival. An expressionistic portrayal of the life of the 18th-century Armenian poet, Sayat Nova, hypnotic and magical in both its palette and imagery, the film was released in the Soviet Union in 1972.

Upon Paradjanov's return to Kiev, he was arrested again on charges of trafficking in objets d'art. When this count was dismissed, he says the authorities "trumped up a charge of homosexuality against me. They said I raped a member of the party and perverted an old lady of eighty with a pornographic pen." In January 1974, he was sentenced to five years in the Gulag—"which will be enough to exterminate you," he was told.* He survived, however, and in 1978, just as his sentence was about to be extended for another five years, he was released, thanks to the relentless campaigning of Lili Brik (Mayakovsky's celebrated mistress, then over ninety) and to help from the dean of French Communist intellectuals, Louis Aragon (Lili Brik's brother-in-law), who interceded directly with Leonid Brezhnev. Paradjanov has since had film projects approved by Armenfilm, only to be vetoed by political authorities. A year ago a Western member of the Armenian diaspora tracked Paradjanov down in his native Tbilisi and found him living in a small room in a house with no water. As with Solzhenitsyn, life in the Gulag seemed to have had a strangely exhilarating effect on Paradjanov. He called it "the most important time of my life so far," adding, "all the great films are as nothing compared to prison camp life." His mind was bursting with ideas for films; he wrote, he drew, but was denied all work of even the humblest sort. At the time of the interview, he survived by gradually selling off all his possessions, his mother's silver, the paintings on the walls, carpets, pieces of embroidery. Soon all would be gone, he said, and he planned to beg in the streets.

This, I repeat, is the man widely thought to be the greatest Soviet film-maker.

WHAT then of this Soviet "New Wave"?

Oblomov is perhaps the most famous character in all Russian fiction, more famous in Russia than Huckleberry Finn in America or even Hamlet in the English-speaking world. In Russia Oblomov is a

* As far as can be ascertained in the West, there is no reliable evidence that Paradjanov is a homosexual. But when it was proposed to Amnesty International that Paradjanov be named "prisoner of the year," he was rejected on the grounds that he was not a "'political prisoner" but had been convicted on a criminal charge.

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household name, a word, a noun. It has entered the Russian language, fathered a historic concept, "Oblomovism," popularly understood as extreme lassitude and torpor. Russian mothers to this day warn lazy children not to be Oblomovs. For over a century, Russian leaders—including Lenin—have entreated their people to cast off the spell of Oblomovism.

It is an odd fate for Oblomov's creator, Ivan Goncharov, a lifelong Russian man of letters and civil servant of the Czarist regime. He was to all appearances patriotic, serving as secretary to a Russian admiral during the Crimean war, and, far from having trouble with the Czar's censors, at one period of his career he actually *served* as a censor. He later edited an official state newspaper, and his last post before retirement was member of the Russian empire's press board. Despite his long government service, he was what the Russians called at the time a "Westernizer," had much in common with Turgenev (whom he accused of plagiarizing his works), and agreed with many of the goals of even the radicals. He favored the abolition of serfdom and the improvement and spread of education, opposed oppression and restrictions on progress. Where he and the radicals parted company Goncharov saw with clarity: "I never passed through a stage of youthful enthusiasm for a utopia animated by the socialist spirit of ideal equality, fraternity, and so forth which stirred other young minds. I had no faith in materialism nor in the conclusions which it pleased people to draw from it as to the apparently beautiful future of mankind." (In our own age, when it is the arcadian Left which so bitterly opposes materialism and the "consumer society," it requires a mental effort to recall that in Goncharov's Russia the state, enveloped in the mysticism of the Eastern Church, was the preeminent custodian of otherworldly and spiritual values, and it was the revolutionaries who were the materialists.) In another novel, *The Precipice*, Goncharov condemned Nihilism.

So, in the midst of 19th-century Russia, so often torn between mad, Slavophile mystics on the Right and mad, utopian revolutionaries on the Left, we have Goncharov, a reformer, a moderate, a skeptic. To have called forth from the Russian people a fictional character of service to both Lenin and the Czar would suggest, at the very least, a certain detachment of spirit. Goncharov began *Oblomov* in 1849, left it, strangely, for almost a decade, and published it in 1859. It was immediately hailed as a masterpiece.

THE novel opens with Oblomov, a member of the lesser Russian nobility, reclining on a sofa in his comfortable St. Petersburg apartment. In the film version we hear, voice over, some of the novel's celebrated opening lines: "Lying down was not for Ilya Ilyitch either a necessity as it is for a sick or a sleepy man, or an occasional need as it is for a person who is tired, or a pleasure as it is for a sluggard: it was his natural state." All day long friends pop by, trying to interest him in the outside world, tempting him to get up and out of the house, to go to interesting places and do exciting things, but, possessed of a kind of terminal indolence, Oblomov is not up to it. He prefers to dream idly of the guileless life of his childhood on his parents' estate (from which he still derives a handsome income). In those halcyon days

> the good people conceived of life as a state of perfect repose and idleness. . . . They had never heard of life being hard, of men being overwhelmed with anxious worries, rushing about from place to place, or devoting themselves to continuous, never-ending labor. . . . They endured work as a punishment laid upon our forefathers, but could not love it and avoided it whenever they could, believing it was possible and right to do so. . . . The way to live had been settled once and for all and taught to them by their parents, who had accepted the teaching ready-made from their grandparents and these in turn from their great-grandparents, with the injunction of keeping it whole and undefiled like Vesta's fire.

But serious trouble has come to Oblomov. His lease has expired and he must move. He has plenty of time and money to move, of course, but the trouble! The bustle! The to-ing and fro-ing! He can't bear it. His grumpy manservant, Zahar, has the misfortune to remark, "Well, other people move, why can't we?" This leads to the emotional climax of the first section of the novel, as of the film. Oblomov is in a rage. "*'Other people!'*" he cries:

> "Other people" are godforsaken wretches, rough uncultured creatures who live in some attic in dirt and poverty! They can sleep quite comfortably on a mat somewhere in a yard! All that is nothing to them. They guzzle herrings and potatoes. Poverty drives them from pillar to post and they keep on the run all day. *They* might be ready enough to move to new lodging, I dare say. . . . What are "other people"? They are people who clean their own boots, dress themselves, and though they sometimes look like gentlemen, it's mere pretense, they have never even had a servant. If they have no one to send on an errand they run themselves! They think nothing of stirring the wood in the stove or of dusting. . . .

"Lots of Germans are like that," Zahar remarks gloomily. Oblomov snaps back:

> Exactly! And I? Do you imagine I am like that? . . . Comparing me to "other people"! Why, do I rush about or work? Do I look thin and wretched? Do I go short on things? I should hope I have someone to wait on me and do things for me. Thank heaven I've never in my life put on my stockings myself! And to whom am I saying this? Haven't you waited on me since I was a child? You have seen that I have been brought up tenderly, have never suffered from cold or hunger or poverty, have never earned my living or done any work. So how could you bring yourself to compare me with other people? . . . Bring me some *kvass*. . . .

"And here I work and worry night and day," Oblomov goes on in the injured voice of a man who is not rightly appreciated:

> Sometimes I lie awake at night with a burning head and sinking heart, turning from side to side,

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thinking how I can arrange things for the best. And for whom? Why, for my peasants, and that means you too. I dare say when you see me pull the blanket over my head you think I lie there like a log and sleep. But no, I don't sleep! I keep thinking hard what I can do so that my peasants should not suffer any privations, or envy others, or complain against me to the Lord God on the Day of Judgment, but should pray for me and remember the good I have done them. Oh, ungrateful men!

Zahar begins to sob and Oblomov is moved also. As he admonishes Zahar, Oblomov becomes deeply convinced, for the moment, of the benefits he has conferred on his peasants and utters his last reproaches in a shaking voice with tears in his eyes.

"Well, now go in peace," Oblomov says conciliatingly:

Wait, give me some more *kvass*! My throat is quite parched. You might have thought of it yourself —you must have noticed your master was hoarse. This is what you have brought me to. . . . This is how you watch over your master's peace of mind. You have thoroughly upset me and made it impossible for me to think of anything new and useful. And who will be the worse for it? Why, yourselves. I have devoted my whole life to my peasants. It's for your sake I have retired from the service and sit within four walls. . . . Well, I forgive you. There, it is striking three! Only two hours left before dinner. There's no time to do anything in two hours, and there's a lot to be done. . . . I think I'll lie down for a bit; I'm quite worn out. Pull down the curtains and shut me in properly so that I am not disturbed. I may sleep for an hour. Wake me at half-past four. . . .

By the arrival of Stolz, Oblomov's dearest childhood friend, determined to drag Oblomov out into the world, we are, incredibly, one-third of the way into the novel (rather less into the film) and Oblomov is still lying about in his dressing gown.

Stolz, the son of a German Lutheran father (much is made of this), is everything Oblomov is not. He is handsome, physically strong, highly intelligent, industrious. He does not daydream. He does not brood. He is dynamic, active, self-reliant. He keeps close watch over his emotions, avoiding those that might lead him into imprudence. His attack on life is awesome in its energy. There are few modern societies in which one would not imagine Stolz successful, and his success in St. Petersburg is spectacular. He has risen in the civil service, gone into business, become rich. He is the darling of St. Petersburg. Stolz does not have much of the old Russian "soul," but what of that? As clearly as Oblomov is the symbol of the old Russia, doomed to disappearance, Stolz is the man of the future. "Lo," writes Goncharov, "soon will come many Stolzs . . . with Russian names!"

Most of the action of the novel, and the film, is the result of Stolz's resolute efforts to drag his childhood friend into the outside, modern world of bright social life, business, beautiful women. All ends in failure. Oblomov's languor is, indeed, terminal.

It is hard for a Westerner to read Oblomov's dialogue, like the passages I quoted above, as anything but pure parody. The great British comic actor Spike Milligan played *Oblomov* on the London stage several years ago as a straight comedy. In fact, Milligan found his urge to embellish the absurdities of the character so irrepressible that the management felt obliged to change the billing to: "Spike Milligan in *Son of Oblomov*."

But the Russian view is different. It has been said of Goncharov that he set out to write a tract, but that it got away from him. His Oblomov is too appealing. To the Russian mind, at least, there is something seductive about Oblomov. He is a total parasite, of course, and has no useful social function. But he is lovable. He has the innocence of a child. Stolz himself says that there is "gold" in him, that his soul has "the clarity of crystal." Indeed, if Russians had not felt affection for Oblomov it is not likely he would have maintained such a hold over their imagination for over a century. Never experiencing the religious and social upheavals that formed the Western mind, never knowing puritanism (either Protestant or Catholic), plunged directly from a mystical feudal society into the modern world, Russians, acknowledging obviously that one could no longer live like Oblomov, seemed still to think that it would be nice if one could. When Stolz draws Oblomov into St. Petersburg's mercantile life, Oblomov can't see the point of it all. If a man is rich already, what is the point of working so hard merely to become twice as rich? There is a feeling that Oblomov is "too good for this world." Even the Bolsheviks, thundering against Oblomov, almost forgot that he was a parasite and exploiter of other men's labor and fulminated mostly against his quietism. It was not out of such men that one built a Soviet state.

Somewhat astonishingly, Nikita Mikhalkov, director and co-screenwriter of this new film, has taken Oblomov's side in the great struggle for the soul of Russia. "The Oblomovism problem has been replaced in the world by another problem," he has said in an interview. "Our problem today is excessive pragmatism, opportunism, careerism." His film seems to tell us that Soviet society, in its harsh driving, has lost something gentle, generous, humane. Oblomov as hero? Stolz as villain? This is probably about as far in criticism as a Soviet artist is allowed to go.

Mikhalkov's film is extremely beautiful. When Stolz brings Oblomov out into St. Petersburg society, the sleigh rides on the white snow past the capital's turquoise-and-white rococo palaces are breathtaking. One sees nothing of the squalor of the old regime. A gracious country home of the gentry is shown in the quiet light of dawn in a scene of limpid lyricism, with the servants scurrying out with buckets for water amid the birch trees. We catch glimpses of serene interiors through doorways, of peaceful family gatherings in spacious rooms. Oblomov (Oleg Tabakov) lolls about in meadows, listening to the sounds of birds and insects. Stolz

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(Yury Bogatyrev) goes dashing from a Russian steam bath straight out into the Russian snow (it is winter again), throwing snow all over his naked body to show Oblomov the virtues of the vigorous life. Somehow Oblomov gets up the energy to fall in love with the delightful Olga (Elena Solovey), who, almost miraculously, returns his love. During her most emotional scene ("No, no! You don't really love me! You just want to see me cry!") she walks agitatedly down a lane on her estate at night, certain that Oblomov is one step behind her, imploring her to make up their spat. Suddenly she turns, and she is alone. She has been talking to herself. Oblomov's timidity and inertia have overcome him. All this tension! All this stress! This love business is far too strenuous.

But the film does everything to make Oblomov sympathetic. It begins—as the novel does not—with a touching evocation of Oblomov's happy childhood with a wonderful child actor playing the six-year-old Oblomov. At the movie's end Oblomov himself is dead. But he has had a son in a way requiring the least exertion possible, by his housekeeper, and Stolz has adopted him and is bringing him up. We see Stolz, older, settled, no longer the golden youth of St. Petersburg, much of the enthusiasm and the joy of life gone out of him now. A visit by the housekeeper-mother is announced to the little Oblomov (played by the same quite entrancing child actor), and in the film's last, long, sustained shot he goes skipping off across a field to embrace her. "Mummy! Mummy! Mummy!" Thus: vessels of innocence and purity do we come upon earth. This is what the Stolzs have taken away from Russia, and perhaps from all of us. So says Nikita Mikhalkov's *Oblomov*.

MIKHALKOV has made at least one other excellent movie, *A Slave of Love*, about a crew making a tatty silent film by that name behind the White lines in the Crimea (Russia's Riviera) during the Bolshevik Revolution. Starring the same Elena Solovey who plays Olga in *Oblomov*, the movie has a last reel straight out of Mosfilm's agitprop department, but earlier parts portray with great charm and affection the fly-by-night bunch of kitschmongers and Russian snake-oil salesmen making the silent film.

Mikhalkov is thirty-five, personable, clearly very talented. He represents no fewer then four generations of membership in the Russian and Soviet artistic elite, his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather all being famous artists, one a poet, the two others painters. His older brother (Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky) is also a successful film director. Mikhalkov sees all the foreign films he wants at the Moscow Film Institute (John Ford, Ingmar Bergman, Milos Forman, Bob Fosse). He has visited the United States five times in four years. (I met him in New York, and his brother in Los Angeles.) He is a friend of Francis Ford Coppola. I would assume that Mikhalkov realizes he is a highly privileged Russian, and very fortunate, except that he makes remarks like, "The problem isn't getting the studio to let me make what I want to make. The problem is how to keep those who can't make movies from making them and poisoning the public taste. . . . People without talent don't have the right to make films."

Defenders of oppressed artists will notice not the faintest (admitted) awareness here of the problems of such as Mikhalkov's great colleague Sergei Paradjanov. Interestingly, Mikhalkov, in the same interview in which he condemned contemporary Russia for opportunism and "careerism," went on to say in the same critical tone, "People are still kind and thoughtful, but precisely as much as is convenient for them." This is a statement with which I would not want to quarrel. And Sergei Paradjanov has become extremely inconvenient.

ONE of the Soviet film directors Nikita Mikhalkov might well want to prevent from "poisoning public taste," if he had the power, is Vladimir Menshov, director of the Academy Award-winning *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears*, another example of the alleged Soviet "New Wave"—a rather heterogeneous group, as it turns out.

Most Westerners interested in these matters are familiar with the doctrine of Socialist Realism, the official aesthetic creed of the Soviet Union fixed by Stalin, Zhdanov, and Maxim Gorky in 1932 and still in force, if in an attenuated form. But in recent decades there has grown up in Russia an artistic school, almost unknown in the West, that I can only call Socialist Escapism. In its cinema form, works of this sort, although paying lip-service here and there to Soviet pieties, are little more than soap operas. Produced for a society of scarcity, they are reminiscent in many ways of Hollywood films of the 30's, and take blatant liberties with realities of life in the Soviet Union. Western viewers uninformed on Soviet affairs are ill-equipped to see where reality leaves off and the dreaming begins, and are likely to take these films as much more realistic than they are even intended to be. (A newsmagazine reviewer who found the mode of *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* to be "patient realism" wrote: "Somehow one did not think of the Soviet Union as being full of women wearing smart suits. . . ." Let me assure him, it is not.) What the films are intended to be, clearly, is the Shopgirl's Dream, and at their worst they are the movie equivalent of the unrestricted sale of vodka in state stores. Everything else might be in short supply, but never vodka. *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* is a moderate example of the genre. Soviet officials in Los Angeles made no attempt to conceal their absolute astonishment that it should have won an Academy Award.

The film is divided into two parts, the first of which takes place in 1958. Three girls from collective farms (they call themselves "yokels") are living at a dormitory for single working girls in Moscow. They are all manual workers. One (Katerina) is a machine operator at a textile mill; another (Lyudmila) works on an assembly line in a state bakery; a third (Tanya) is a construction worker. In varying degrees they are all embarrassed by their peasant backgrounds and admiring and envious of real Muscovites, particularly, of course, those with good jobs. Needless to say, the

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obsessive subject of discussion among the girls is "finding a good man," or, not to put too fine a point on it, "marrying rich." Lyudmila, the most aggressive, won't go places where they will meet "only yokels like us" and conducts elaborate subterfuges when receiving telephone calls at the dormitory to create the impression that she is living in a private Moscow residence. Her list of desirable matches will give you a rough picture of the Soviet elite, at least as viewed by a factory hand just in from a collective farm: diplomats, actors, artists, poets, scientists, engineers, TV men, doctors, fashion designers, star athletes (so much for the classless Soviet society).

It should be pointed out that the picture gets under way with a spectacular example of socialist daydreaming. In the USSR people do not hop about changing jobs and places of residence to suit their fancy. Government authorization is required. To this day agricultural workers have great difficulty leaving a collective farm for a city—above all Moscow—and until 1956, shortly before the picture begins, such movements, along with most other changes of location or employment, were strictly forbidden. Amenities in the Soviet countryside even today are such that, I have the impression, half the agricultural population of Russia would move to Moscow immediately if it could. So if our farm girls have reached Moscow as early as 1958 they are already the envy of most of the women in the Soviet Union.

We see the girls applying eye shadow and mascara, whereas in 1958 even lipstick was not available in Russia. (Which is to say, Nikita Mikhalkov's mother could no doubt buy all the cosmetics she wanted at special, restricted stores, but they were not to be had on the open market.) The girls' attempts to leap the gap of economic and social class and find "Mr. Right" are equally fanciful.*

Tanya, the least ambitious, settles for a fellow construction worker and is Truly Happy, but oddly enough we don't spend much time with her. Mostly we follow the careers of Lyudmila and Katerina who, by dint of mighty efforts, manage to have love affairs with men "above their station." Katerina becomes pregnant, but when her boyfriend, a TV cameraman, finds out she is only a factory hand, with no family, connections, or apartment, he abandons her (his mother brings the scornful news). Katerina has her illegitimate baby and Part I ends in the sort of tears that Moscow seems to believe in after all, at least as a prelude to the final triumph of virtue.

God sees the truth, but waits until Part II to deliver the prizes. It is now some twenty years later. Tanya is still Truly Happy, a proletarian heroine, but, curiously, is still not thought interesting enough to spend much time with. Somewhat unfairly, it would seem, the director apportions screen time strictly according to how high each girl has risen in life. Lyudmila has gotten out of the bakery, and married a star hockey player. But there has been something too pushy about her sort of amibiton, I think all would agree, and so she is punished by having her husband turn into an alcoholic. She is divorced, but has risen to a white-collar job in the "service sector," which is still better than the bakery.

But it is Katerina who has shown pure, selfless, Soviet ambition. Devoted only to her work, the welfare of her child and fellow workers, and the high goals of the Soviet state ("But line four is idle!"), she has risen to become director of the entire textile factory, and strides about in a three-piece, *Dress for Success*-type executive-lady suit. She is a bit lonely, of course, with all this selfless devotion to work and to others, but fate soon sends her the man she has waited for so long. Gosha is one of the film's most gemlike examples of having it both ways, managing to be at the same time an Ideal Worker (in that he works with his hands) and yet better than a worker (in that he dresses smartly and hangs out with a ritzy crowd from the Science Institute, one of whom says, "I owe 75 percent of my Ph.D. thesis to Gosha's hands.") The last line in the movie is Katerina saying soulfully, "I've searched for you so long."

So if you did not think the Russians could make *Three Coins in the Fountain* or *How to Marry a Millionaire* (both over a quarter of a century old, incidentally), you were wrong. They can do even worse. They can take the eternal ingredients of this sort of moth-eaten, shopgirl-oriented, dream-factory movie and add hypocrisies which are uniquely their own.

This, then, exposed before Western eyes, is Socialist Escapism. *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* has won an Academy Award, generally highly favorable U.S. notices ("memorably winning and true" . . . "lovely" . . . "endearing" . . . "one of the best films I've seen"), leaving me with the unprovable suspicion that there is a tendency in the U.S. film-making and reviewing communities wishfully predisposed, given half a chance, to like something Russian. (It is very hard for me to imagine a comparable reception for the same film made in Spain, say, or even France.) On the way out of the packed showing of the movie at the recent Los Angeles FILMEX, where it was very enthusiastically received, some women were saying joyfully, "I never realized the Russians were so much like us!" Another comment frequently heard was, "So warm! The Russians are so warm!"

It made one feel very cold-hearted indeed to remember Sergei Paradjanov, who might now be begging in the streets of Tbilisi.

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* Regarding social class in the Soviet Union a personal anecdote is perhaps appropriate. In the mid-60's, at a dance hall at the Gorky Park of Culture and Rest in Moscow, I danced with a Russian girl, a factory hand. The experience was a trifle awkward, the girl seeming so intimidated as to be almost cowed. I reported my impression to a friend, a member of the Soviet elite, who had observed the scene. Attributing to me various splendors I had difficulty in recognizing (worldliness, sophistication, magnificent apparel), he found the girl's behavior understandable and normal. When I told him that such attributes as he saw in me did not earn me much in the way of deference among the working classes of America, his answer was both terse and somber: "This is Russia."

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Books in Review

The Carter Years

GOVERNING AMERICA. By JOSEPH A. CALIFANO, JR. *Simon & Schuster. 474 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by
CHESTER E. FINN, JR.

ANYONE whose memories of the Carter administration zig-zag from pity to contempt to wistful regret, and who is not sure why, should read this book. For Joseph Califano, ex-Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, has penned a memoir that both recounts and embodies a number of the sorriest and least praiseworthy aspects of the Carter Presidency, as well as enough of the unconsummated good ideas and noble impulses gone awry to stir the embers of our disappointment that something with so much potential achieved so little.

This is the tale of Califano's two-and-a-half years in the Cabinet: from December 21, 1976, when the voice on the telephone said, "This is Jimmy Carter. I'd like you to be my Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare," to July 18, 1979, when, his administration in disarray and his standing in the polls very low, the President escorted Califano into the small study adjoining the Oval Office and said, "I have decided to accept your resignation."

These thirty months would have been busy and exciting even for an ordinary mortal, but Califano, a renowned Washington workaholic and hard-driving taskmaster, crammed an enormous amount of activity into them. Simply trying to manage the vast HEW bureaucracy (from which the Education Department was split off, despite Califano's strenuous objections, during this period) was a monumental undertaking. But the HEW Secretary was also, necessarily, in the midst of every major initiative and controversy in domestic social policy: abortion, welfare reform, national health insurance, stabilizing the Social Security system, aid for parochial schools, busing, and more.

The book is organized around such issues, but has little to say about them that is fresh or even worthwhile. The author's homilies about containing hospital costs, the elements of meaningful welfare reform, and the immorality of abortion are mostly predictable, sometimes clarifying, occasionally banal.

What is far more interesting is that just half a year after the end of the Carter administration, a window has been opened through which we can see enough of what was going on (though only in domestic policy) to gain a better understanding of what made it tick—and why so few tears were shed when the ticking stopped.

Many memoirs will appear in the months ahead, presumably including Carter's own. Califano's has two advantages. He has gotten it out first, while memories are still fresh—thanks in large part to the eighteen-month headstart that his firing gave him. And, having been the key domestic-policy adviser in Lyndon Johnson's White House, he is able to draw some illuminating comparisons between our two most recent Democratic Presidents and between the perspectives and roles of their Cabinets and staffs.

Even if we allow for the manifest awe in which Califano holds Lyndon Johnson, and for his understandable displeasure with the man who dismissed him, Carter does not come across in this book as a man who was ever really ready to be President of the United States. His celebrated attention to the most minute details of government programs and policies got him up early in the morning and kept him awake late at night. But to what end?

> Lyndon Johnson would have said, "Put a welfare-reform program together that gives poor people some money and encourages people to work and keep their families together," and left all but the key policy and political judgments to his staff. Carter read hundreds of pages of material on welfare programs and did almost everything but draft the legislation. He displayed the same fervor for total immersion in energy, the African subcontinent, tax reform, and SALT II. In addition to being President, he was, as an HEW staffer remarked after one day of my welfare-reform briefings, the highest paid assistant secretary for planning that ever put a reform proposal together.

While mastering the technicalities, Carter never figured out how to inspire, horsetrade, inveigle, embarrass, or coax his major social-policy proposals through the Congress. Seemingly he did not like, or trust, or understand its leaders and its folkways. Hence the following exchange could take place in the aftermath of a productive session between Califano and Senate Finance Committee chairman Russell Long, who was keen to get the first part of a national health-insurance program in place prior to the 1980 election:

> I told the President about our conversation and urged him to see Long. He was reluctant. "Do you understand him when he talks?" Carter asked, adding, "I never can understand him. And then I never know what he's going to do—except screw me most of the time."

Even more dismaying is the depth of cynicism, verging on political amorality, on the part of a chief executive whose main asset was said to be his basic decency. Califano describes a Cabinet meeting in July 1979 after the President returned from his protracted "retreat" at Camp David determined to purge and renew his administration:

> Carter wanted us also to fill out personnel evaluations of each of our key staff members. Hamilton Jordan would distribute some "tough forms" to fill out on each one. He wanted us to re-

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CHESTER E. FINN, JR., *the author of several books on education, has spent the past four years working on issues of social policy on Capitol Hill.*

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view the work of our subordinates, and "get rid of all those who are incompetent, except minorities and women." No woman or minority member could be fired; their situations were to be discussed with the White House, the President said.

Is it any wonder that, in the light of such qualities as are here revealed, even many of those who abhor the policies of Jimmy Carter's successor have few regrets that he is gone?

JOSEPH A. CALIFANO, JR. naturally wishes us to think him a better HEW Secretary than Jimmy Carter was a President. After all, he was unceremoniously dumped —notwithstanding Carter's judgment that he had "been the best Secretary of HEW"—and he has his reputation to consider. Besides, though Carter may be finished as a political leader, it is doubtful that we have seen the last of his former Secretary, who is as plausible a choice as any to help lead the Democratic party out of the wilderness in which it now wanders.

But where would he lead it? The map provided in this book is clear enough, and depressing. Califano has never gotten past the basic lessons he learned at the knee of Lyndon Johnson in the heyday of the Great Society: there is no problem that cannot be solved by the federal government nor any that *should not* be. All that is needed is leadership, imagination, and hard work. The possibility seems never to have crossed his mind that worthy goals sometimes clash and that solutions sometimes give rise to new problems that may be more vexing than those they were devised to cure. There is a breathtaking disingenuousness to some of Califano's pronouncements and—for a man so intelligent—an astonishing refusal to see the incompatibility in many of his views.

One large blind spot concerns civil-rights enforcement in the field of education. Califano devotes a full chapter to his own efforts to stamp out every last vestige of discrimination by schools and colleges. We learn that had he not heckled the Attorney General and the White House, the Carter ad-

"An exciting and haunting book," says *Sara Davidson.* "Writing as a Jew who has chosen assimilation, Anne Roiphe asks questions no one has put so forthrightly:

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"She remembers, reads, explores, takes inventory, wonders, protests, contemplates and regrets. She writes and writes, hauntingly at times...And she comes to see that she and her family have 'made an error.'"
—Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, New York Times

"Its candor cannot fail to touch the heart."
—Jane Clapperton, Cosmopolitan

"Important and exciting. The writing is lucid, intelligent and at times very moving."*—Library Journal*

"Deeply personal. Readers cannot fail to admire her candor, sincerity and lack of hypocrisy."
—Laurie Levy, Chicago Sun-Times

"Provocative, at times infuriating, yet an unfailingly worthy and intriguing chronicle of a member of the post-war 'generation without memory.'"
—Michael J. Bandler, National Jewish Monthly

GENERATION WITHOUT MEMORY
A JEWISH JOURNEY IN CHRISTIAN AMERICA

ANNE ROIPHE

Book-of-the-Month Club Alternate

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ministration would have come out on the side of Allan Bakke in his reverse-discrimination suit against the University of California Medical School at Davis. We read of his relentless efforts to desegregate the state university system of North Carolina, despite the enormous political difficulties that those efforts (combined with his anti-smoking campaign) posed for Carter in the Tarheel State. Yet without missing a beat, without suggesting even the possibility of inconsistency, the very next chapter is a paean to academic freedom, collegiate self-governance, and the importance of federal nonintervention in educational decision-making, particularly at the post-secondary level:

> It is doubtful that any college, or university in America can survive in the 1980's without federal assistance. That fact alone calls for the construction of legal safeguards to preserve academic independence and freedom of inquiry as permanent and impenetrable as we can devise. Financial need must not subvert academic freedom and unwittingly create a national university system subservient to the federal government. . . .

A perceptive observation, viewed alone, but more than a little hypocritical coming from a man who just a few pages earlier has been patting himself on the back for his success in getting the Carter administration to press for "race-sensitive" university admissions policies.

Unfortunately, the problem runs deeper than textual inconsistencies. It is embedded in the world view of many who lost the 1980 elections, and—unless the Republicans make some enormous blunders—it is apt to keep losing future elections for them. This is a smugness about the efficacy of government in general and the federal government in particular to right wrongs, solve problems, cure ills, and prevent hardships.

To be sure, the possibility of human fallibility within government is acknowledged. Califano's entire memoir could even be described as a series of object lessons with the benefit of hindsight. If only Carter had not insisted on a zero price tag for his welfare-reform plan; if only Califano had had a "more sophisticated grasp of the political code words on abortion"; if only Hamilton Jordan and Jody Powell had held regular meetings with Cabinet members rather than taking potshots at them through the press; if only the President had not beeen obsessed with "leaks"; if only the National Education Association had not been allowed to exert so much influence on policy; if only Senator Kennedy had been willing to compromise on health insurance. If only. . . .

But all the lessons concern tactics, procedures, personalities, and techniques. Califano has, in a word, missed the point. The reason the Carter administration accomplished so little and is so little missed is not primarily that Jimmy Carter was a less adroit technician than Lyndon Johnson. It is that neither Carter nor his able lieutenants—and Califano was certainly among the ablest—ever figured out that Washington had overreached itself; that its expenditures, its intrusions, and its ambitions had exceeded what the nation wanted; that a few miles west of the Potomac, north of the White House, and south of the monumental new HEW headquarters was a country with scant enthusiasm for more government programs, national health insurance, comprehensive welfare reform, a separate Department of Education, race-conscious admissions and employment policies, bans on smoking, or new controls on the behavior of hospitals, schools, and social-service agencies. It is incredible that an administration that paid such close attention to Patrick Caddell's opinion polls did not realize how out of step it was with the mood of the nation.

The Republicans figured this out in plenty of time. While Carter was firing Califano and otherwise rearranging the furniture of his Presidency in the summer of 1979, peeking at Senator Kennedy over one shoulder and the National Education Association over the other, Ronald Reagan was preparing a brilliant campaign against the excesses of government which the incumbents had come to personify.

That campaign continues in the early summer of 1981, and its own latent excesses are now beginning to appear. Most worrisome of these are the suggestions that the federal government cannot do anything without making a hash of things; that it is inherently inept, if not actually evil; that there is no problem so acute as to justify a federal solution; and that at least in the domain of domestic social policy, we would all be better off if the national government would pack its bags and go away.

This view of Washington as doddleringly incompetent is no more accurate than the perception of Washington as omnipotent, and the spectacle of Richard Schweiker slashing away at "categorical" programs is hardly more reassuring than the sight of Joseph Califano staying up into the wee hours trying to create more of them. But it is Schweiker's—and Reagan's—turn, at least for a while, and it is to be hoped that whatever lessons are theirs to be learned will be absorbed before the opportunity is lost.

Class, Culture & Society

THE WINDING PASSAGE: ESSAYS AND SOCIOLOGICAL JOURNEYS 1960-1980. By DANIEL BELL. *Abt Books. 370 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by MICHAEL NOVAK

"ALREADY the sun is at midtierce." So reads the inscription from Dante at the head of this book, whose eighteen essays by one of the country's leading sociologists constitute a "winding passage" through scientific, political, and cultural disciplines. The five-part book begins with essays on technology and ends with essays on Jewish identity, memory, and the sacred. The three central parts deal with utopian thinkers (Veblen, Fourier, Marx); intellectuals and "the new class"; and four basic social changes of our time, including changes in the meaning of Amer-

MICHAEL NOVAK, *Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is currently working on a book about capitalism.*

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ica, in the salience of ethnicity, in international structures, and in liberalism.

Few writers pack more esoteric but useful information into each essay. Given the talents of both journalist and academic, Bell manages consistently to be a kind of insiders' outsider. To buttress his contention that science and technology, by means of what John Kenneth Galbraith calls the "technostructure," have gained an increasing hold upon business corporations and the state, he has learned a great deal about every sort of new technical development —in microcomputers, transistors, lasers—while also retaining an acute sense of the place of each development in intellectual and cultural history.

In analyzing the social changes that have occurred in our time, characterized above all by the growth of bureaucracies, Bell emphasizes process and structure while downplaying such notions as bourgeois, individual, entrepreneur, invention, and liberty. This comes out most clearly in an essay entitled "The New Class: A Muddled Concept." Here Bell makes probably the most important analytical contribution of the book (the dust jacket calls attention to it but, ironically, the index does not): the concept of the *situs*. This concept is derived from the theory of elites (rather than from class theory). It points to five locations from which special interests compete for state funds: economic enterprises; the bureaucracies of government; universities and research organizations; social-welfare organizations (hospitals, social services, community organizations); and the military.

Bell's point is that the "new class" is distributed through all five situses, each in competition with the others. "The controlling argument is this: when the state becomes the decisive arena for the allocation of resources and for the decisions that provide differential power to different activities, the situses are the major factors within the arena, because they are the claimants and the constituencies in that game."

In contrast to others who speak of the "new class," Bell minimizes the ideological connection between pro-statist *interests* and a radical, anti-institutional *culture*. For him, modern capitalism is also pro-statist and anti-bourgeois in culture. Modern capitalism, he argues, has been transformed in two ways. First, state power in directing the economy has grown because of defense, social welfare, the interdependence of regions wrought by technology, and a world economy. Second, hedonism has become central to "the very structure of business enterprises." For these reasons, the "new class" is not a class "in any social-structural sense." He writes: "The 'new class' consists of individuals who have carried the logic of modern culture to its end. Serious and committed, as many are, or trendy and chic, as others may be, they make up a cultural phenome-

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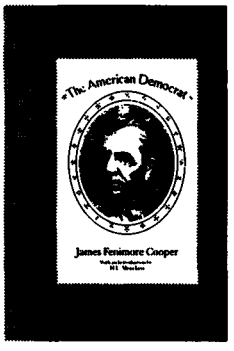

The American Democrat

By James Fenimore Cooper

Introduction by H. L. Mencken

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non that mirrors the breakdown of traditional values in Western society." Chanticleer does not cause the sun to rise by his crowing. Neither, according to Bell, has the "new class" *caused* the structural transformation of capitalism.

This is an odd formulation. For one thing, it ignores or denies the role of ideology in legitimating a movement—the counterculture—adversarial to the bourgeois ethic and politically useful to statism. For another, it is descriptive to a fault, inflating structure and process into necessity. Yet the adversarial culture whose "logic" is now being "carried to its end" has no special heavenly mandate. Opposition to it may be mounted. Nothing obliges us to remain passively where we are. The interesting question, in fact, is how to invent, create, and nourish a *new* transformation of democratic capitalism.

Bell himself seems occasionally to glimpse such possibilities. On environmental issues, for example, he writes that "actual operational measures would, in a more innovative way, be left to market mechanisms rather than to cumbersome bureaucratic regulations." This suggests a new ideal for the entire social system, closer to the capitalist than to the socialist model. But the trouble is that Bell characteristically sees little that is creative, self-renewing, or self-transforming within the capitalist principle itself. For him, that principle is empty: "Having lost its original justifications, capitalism has taken over the legitimations of an anti-bourgeois culture to maintain the continuity of its own economic institutions." He cites Joseph Schumpeter and Irving Kristol to argue that capitalism "lacks any 'transcendental justifications,' since it is simply instrumental and rational, and creates no values of its own." He further remarks that "the idea of liberty, which would guard against the centralization of power and bespeak a pluralist society, has given way in the culture to the idea of 'liberation,' which often paradoxically gives way to submission."

The opposite of submission is resistance. It is simply not true that capitalism "creates no values of its own." Capitalism is intrinsically related to some core values—to liberty in the sense of self-discipline; to invention, creativity, and cooperation, the root of the corporation; to work, savings, investment in the future; to self-reliance, etc. In cultures within which such values are not cherished, capitalism cannot take successful root. When such values fail, it cannot survive. The fundamental question of capitalism is a moral question. Capitalism is *not* neutral with respect to values.

Why does Bell see capitalism as morally empty? In part, this may be because the defense of capitalism has been almost wholly left to economists. As he remarks, intellectuals of both Right and Left have been united in their virtually unanimous contempt for bourgeois culture and values. In practice, Bell is not himself so contemptuous of such values, and his analysis of the intellectuals and of modernism indicates conclusively that the anti-bourgeois assault, conventional now for over a century, has been disastrous for all he holds dear. Yet since this assault has its origins precisely in the artistic and educated class, the supposed "guardians" of culture, it is subject to intellectual challenge and correction. The failure of capitalism, to the extent it has failed, is by Bell's own analysis to be laid directly at the feet of the "new class" which, he also demonstrates, has gained so much through the growth of the state.

BELL is said to have quipped that he is a liberal in politics, a socialist in economics, and a conservative in culture. The single most systematic strength in his thinking—and, simultaneously, the single most glaring weakness—is that the socialist in him frequently overwhelms both the liberal and the conservative. Although in one essay he demolishes Michael Harrington's scholastic and ahistorical reconstruction of Marx, and in another is equally severe with the sloppiness of C. Wright Mills, Bell nevertheless cites Marx far more than any other figure, and his imagination still operates within a Marxian horizon.

This is evident, above all, in the sense of fatalism which underlies Bell's work. No determinist, he nevertheless seems so gripped by the power of social forces, structural trends, and underlying factors as to forget that the will of the single individual is the greatest force for change in the cosmos. At root, Bell is incompletely liberal. He misses the underlying spiritual power of democratic capitalism and its capacities for self-renewal. He conceives of it in too purely instrumental terms, neglecting to note the disciplines it teaches, the moral abuses it is designed to prevent, and the virtues it uniquely elicits. Capitalism may be a messy and easily despised form of economic life, but all other known forms are worse. It is, at least, powerfully self-transforming, creative, and inventive. Moreover, uniquely among economic systems, it respects the integrity both of the political order and of the spiritual order. It respects the individuality of the human person, the very basis of the sense of the sacred on which Bell's book concludes.

Finally, even Bell's essays on what it means to be Jewish fail to connect the deep impulses in the Jewish spirit with certain prerequisites for the emergence of capitalism: its sense of the drama of the self, of history, and of the creativity of the human mind and heart. Apart from Judaism and its tutoring of Christianity, it is difficult to imagine how either democracy or capitalism would have emerged as the most fecund social forms of the modern era. The spiritual power of capitalism is, at mid-tierce, the missing link in Bell's thought.

Second Generation

AT HOME IN AMERICA. By DEBORAH DASH MOORE. *Columbia University Press. 303 pp. $15.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID SINGER

FOR a long time it was standard in American Jewish historical writing either to ignore or to dismiss the so-called "second generation" in American Jewish life. Now, at long last, this trend is

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being reversed. Scholars are beginning to take a positive look at this generation, made up of the children of the East European immigrants who flocked to these shores between 1880 and 1920, and to assign considerable weight to its contributions.

At Home in America, Deborah Dash Moore's new study of second-generation New York Jews in the 1920's, is part of this revisionist trend. Mrs. Moore could hardly be more upbeat about her subject, marveling at the ability of these Jews to create the framework for a workable American Jewish synthesis. Like other members of what might be called the "new urban" school of Jewish history, the author is centrally concerned with conveying the quality of everyday life in the period she is writing about. To that end she dwells at length on the role of Jewish neighborhoods in the 20's, describing in great detail such things as the kind of housing occupied by second-generation New York Jews (down to the pink pseudo-marble tiles in Bronx bathrooms), the kinds of jobs they held, and the ways they spent their leisure time.

In presenting this material, Mrs. Moore draws freely on both traditional and non-traditional sources, ranging from memoir literature to census tracts, government reports, organizational records, and so on. There are also a fair number of statistical tables (the obligatory bow to "quanto-history"), but these are more than made up for by the abundant photographs, some of them charmingly amateurish, that dot the volume.

According to the author, it was the second-generation New York Jews who provided all of American Jewry with the model for a "type of ethnicity consonant with middle-class American values." Ironically, they did so by taking the fullest possible advantage of the special opportunities provided by the city itself. Thus, New York's multiethnic environment, where white Protestants were a distinct minority, made it relatively easy for Jews to put forward claims to a survivalist-oriented, ethnic pluralism. In doing so, of course, they were following the lead of the Irish Catholics who, at an earlier point, had refused to knuckle under to Wasp conformity.

If New York's polyglot character encouraged Jews to assert strong ethnic claims, the city's neighborhood structure helped to turn those claims into a reality. Neighborhoods in New York were parcels of ethnic turf, and in their own enclaves Jews had the freedom and elbow room to "synthesize their cultural values and associational patterns with their social and economic group interests." Last but not least, the sheer size of the New York Jewish population, the largest concentration of Jews in history, fueled a vibrant ethnicity, with weight of numbers providing psychological security even as it assured the presence of varied forms of Jewish cultural and religious expression. In New York City, in short, it was easy to be a Jew.

IN DEMONSTRATING how the members of the second generation "succeeded in wedding their experiences as New Yorkers to their existence as Jews," Mrs. Moore focuses on housing patterns, economic trends, and neighborhood institutions. In choosing where they would live, Jews exhibited what the author calls a conspicuous "concentrated dispersion," combining residential mobility with residential segregation. The new Jewish neighborhoods, most especially the Grand Concourse section in the Bronx and Flatbush in Brooklyn, were anything but haphazard arrangements. Rather, as Mrs. Moore shows in a fine chapter on "Jewish Geography," they came into being as a result of conscious planning, with Jewish builders hiring Jewish workers to put up the type of housing (apartment buildings with "all the conveniences") that would appeal to a newly emergent middle-class Jewish clientele. In enabling second-generation Jews to purchase an "ethnic version of the American dream," Jewish builders created re-

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markably similar middle-class neighborhoods in Brooklyn and the Bronx where ethnic identification could be "natural, informal, almost invisible, its American and Jewish components inextricably woven into a matrix of local activity."

If second-generation New York Jews happily shared the streets of the new neighborhoods with each other, it was in large part due to the fact that they had a similar socioeconomic outlook. On the Lower East Side and in other immigrant neighborhoods, working-class and middle-class Jews had been forced to live side by side, with the result that class conflict centering on economic issues had often turned into full-scale communal struggle. The new Jewish enclaves, by contrast, were solidly middle-class, and this promoted communal harmony. It was the "relatively rapid, collective social mobility" of the second generation, the author stresses, that made possible "a kind of ethnic community only imagined a generation before by those who had sought to establish a legally constituted, formal Jewish community—the *Kehillah*."

Not only did the children of the East European immigrants avoid class struggle, they actually took positive steps toward class consolidation by "synthesiz[ing] their ethnic values and class interests." Thus, as increasing numbers of Jews entered the white-collar fields of teaching, social work, pharmacy, and law, they formed professional associations (such as the Jewish Teachers Association) which also enhanced their group consciousness. For second-generation Jewish New Yorkers, then, the "universal business of earning a living," as the author points out, became as well an "exercise in ethnic group membership."

IN THE context of middle-class neighborhood living, such local institutions as schools, synagogues, social groups, and political clubs contributed "secular and religious attributes to Jewish ethnicity, and supported a pluralistic vision of American society." Mrs. Moore devotes two chapters to the public school and the synagogue center, showing how both of these turned "the expression of Jewishness into a public activity." Her key point with regard to the public school is that second-generation parents and teachers viewed it as an ethnic institution no less than as the "local representative of American society, the repository of its ideal values, and the symbol of its aspirations." Accordingly, they were not at all shy in demanding that the public school adopt and implement democratic pluralism as official policy. (The great symbolic victory came in 1931, when the Board of Education introduced Hebrew-language instruction into the high-school curriculum.)

As for the synagogue center, which Mrs. Moore calls the chief "institutional bulwark of middle-class ethnicity," its combination of decorous worship, recreation, sociability, and Jewish education all under one roof represented the epitome of snug respectability. Here, indeed, as second-generation Jews saw it, was an institution ideally suited to "guarantee Jewish structural segregation from American society even as it exemplified Jewish absorption of American middle-class norms."

So strongly was Jewish communal life in New York rooted in the neighborhood, according to Mrs. Moore, that the members of the second generation never really succeeded in establishing effective city-wide organizations. Of course, the sheer size of the city's Jewish population made concerted action rather unwieldy, and the presence in New York of the head offices of many national and international Jewish organizations further complicated the chances of bringing Jews together on a city-wide basis. But the chief stumbling block to the development of a larger communal vision in New York was undoubtedly, as she maintains, the factor of Jewish neighborhood living with its strong local loyalties. In the end, second-generation Jews had to fall back on philanthropy, as represented by the Federation for the Support of Jewish Philanthropic Societies, for whatever they sought in the way of a "surrogate community" encompassing all Jewish New Yorkers.

For Mrs. Moore, this drawback

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was a small price to pay for the extraordinary accomplishments of second-generation New York Jews in devising what she calls "a form of urban community imbued with middle-class values, yet able to insure the persistence of the Jewish group." Not only did they create an enduring structure for their children, she argues, they actually brought into being—in the form of the new Jewish neighborhoods in Brooklyn and the Bronx—a "moral community" in which individual and collective Jewish aspirations were inextricably bound together.

THIS is a large claim, and one which, within limits, *At Home in America* defends quite convincingly. The book also gives the reader a genuine *feel* for what life was like in New York's middle-class Jewish enclaves in the 1920's (though understating the role of Jewish political radicalism). Where the book is disappointing, however, is in its self-imposed scope. Because Mrs. Moore never moves beyond the rather narrow frame of reference of the new urban history, there are significant omissions. Thus, we learn nothing about the role second-generation Jews played in establishing a variety of national Jewish organizations, or about their efforts to assist European and Palestinian Jews in this period. Nor is there any mention of the contributions made by members of the second generation to the general cultural life of the city. Indeed, the book does not even list the names of prominent Jewish New Yorkers of the 20's, as though to do so would be to stray beyond the legitimate confines of the inquiry.

There is yet a further problem with *At Home in America*, arising from Mrs. Moore's commendable effort to portray the second generation in a positive light. True, the new Jewish neighborhoods in Brooklyn and the Bronx were hothouses of Jewish ethnicity, but by and large it was an ethnicity lacking firm religious and cultural supports. Thus, not many of the Jews described here attended the religious services held in their synagogue centers, and not many saw to it that their children took advantage of the Hebrew-language instruction available in the public schools. For the most part, second-generation Jewish New Yorkers were content to depend on the ties created by Jewish neighborhood living. Good Jews, and proud ones, they were not people of impressive piety or serious Jewish learning. Hence, they had little in the way of solid Jewish content to pass on to the third generation—a problem whose consequences we face today.

Still, it is a measure of the distance Mrs. Moore has traversed from the tendency of Jewish historians to dismiss the second generation as hopelessly materialistic in its values that one can fault her book for being insufficiently critical. She is fully appreciative of the positive qualities of second-generation New York Jews in the 1920's —their desire to succeed, their appreciation of American freedom, their love of the Jewish people. Most importantly, the author of *At Home in America* does not begrudge the members of the second generation their middle-class way of life. Here, indeed, as compared to previous American Jewish historical writing, is revisionism with a vengeance.

Giving Up

REAL SECURITY: RESTORING AMERICAN POWER IN A DANGEROUS DECADE. By RICHARD J. BARNET. *Simon & Schuster. 160 pp. $10.95.*

Reviewed by PENN KEMBLE

AS A work of substance, this small book could easily go unnoticed, but as a case study in changing political styles it is a gem. Although the title would suggest a discussion of how Americans can best defend their values and way of life, in fact the book is an attempt at persuading us that we had better make ready to give it all up.

Richard J. Barnet, founder and senior fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies, picks over the rubble of American foreign policy

PENN KEMBLE *is the president of the Foundation for Democratic Education in Washington, D.C.*

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from the age of retreat just past and concludes that salvation lies in prolonging its sway. His themes are pretty much a recycling of arguments that a certain sector of the Left has been making since the 1960's: we should be more accommodating to Soviet power and Third World radicals and resist our ever-present temptation to blow up the world. But if the themes are familiar, the presentation has been changed to suit the times.

A decade ago, Barnet and his cothinkers were outspoken in their opposition to America's international role, and forthright in their support for America's adversaries. "The first imperative is that the world must be made safe for revolution," Barnet wrote in his book of that period, *Intervention and Revolution*. His radio broadcast from Hanoi in 1969 proved that he was no mere think-tank intellectual: opposition to American power was backed by moral fervor and activist élan.

New Leftists of the 1960's were often described as "terrible simplifiers," who sifted through the failings of this society to compose their portrait of *Amerika*: a murderous, plundering, imperialist boor. In their new incarnation these critics and opponents could be called "terrible complicators." They now appear to understand why we might *want* to do something about our situation, but they reject every proposed course of action as misconceived, unworkable, and likely to make things worse.

THUS, Barnet no longer comes before us as a righteous antagonist. Now he is a worried friend, bringing counsel about the "dangerous decade" we have entered upon. Where once he challenged our sense of injustice, today he appeals to fear and hopelessness. The American Century—he even manages to evoke a sense of nostalgia for it—is irretrievably behind us. We must adjust to "new realities," however unpleasant they may seem. "The decline of American power is real," Barnet explains. "To a considerable extent it is the consequence of inevitable world political and economic developments, some of which we encouraged ourselves." Real security, it turns out, is the acceptance of weakness.

In his first chapter, Barnet introduces the three fates who have spun the intractable web we are caught in. One is the host of Third World nations that has risen from the old colonial empires, making the world polity "diffuse" and "unmanageable." A second is the Axis powers of yesterday: ". . . the consequence of German and Japanese revival is a loss of American power." The third is modern military technology; because of it, all our efforts to restore a military balance with the Soviet Union can produce nothing but an illusion of security that masks an increase in actual danger.

The first two of Barnet's fates are plainly impostors. The disintegration of the great colonial empires did, of course, produce a variety of new nations. But was it really inevitable that so many of them would join the anti-American clamor, or prove so susceptible to Soviet influence? The surge in Third World hostility did not come immediately after the great retreat by European colonialism just after World War II. It came instead during the decade of American retreat: the post-Vietnam era.

That decade was also a time when Soviet influence grew: in Indochina, in the Middle East, in Africa, in the Caribbean, and in the international organizations. Barnet is eager to point out that the Soviets are not everywhere admired in the Third World. This might be taken to mean, however, that their influence should be challenged—not fatalistically accepted. The same conclusion might be drawn from Soviet conduct in those places where the Russians have gained dominance. For all their ideological proclamations, they rely in practice on forces other than those of "history": tanks in Afghanistan, Cubans in Africa, Vietnamese in Laos and Cambodia, and KGB people at the UN.

And why should the economic revival of Germany and Japan be considered an inevitable liability for American security interests? The strength of these countries may have brought us some economic irritations, but it surely has enhanced our long-term security. Strong allies may be more complicated allies, but in a showdown they can also be much more valuable.

There are, of course, those who want to stir up political enmity among the leading economic rivals of the democratic world. In Germany, with a little help from Willy Brandt and the Left Socialists, they have had some success. But these forces are neither the natural nor the inevitable result of German prosperity. Here, as in the Third World, a peek under the robes of Barnet's fates reveals left-wing activism disguised for changing times.

Barnet writes at length about the futility of building up U.S. military power, especially those programs that would give us what experts call a strategic counterforce capability: enough secure U.S. missiles to prevent the Soviets from wiping out our arsenal in a first strike. This subject can get a bit arcane. Perhaps it is sufficient in a brief review to note that most U.S. defense planners who question the counterforce strategy also acknowledge that the Soviet Union is an aggressive power against which we have a responsibility somehow to defend ourselves, be it with antiballistic missiles, a stronger civil defense, larger conventional forces—or *something*. For a moment, Barnet seems to hint that he too has an alternative plan:

> Our failure to project power is due to excessive spending on behalf of military strategies that cannot work and insufficient spending on behalf of political and economic strategies that can work.

Anyone with a fondness for political and economic strategies which can help resist Soviet influence will be disappointed, however. Neither in this book nor at any time in his career has Barnet proposed aiding the Polish workers, encouraging land reform in El Salvador, helping set up a Radio Free Cuba, or anything of the kind.

This is because, as his conclusion makes evident, Barnet does not really believe that the U.S.

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should trouble itself much over the growth of Soviet power or the spread of Marxist-Leninist dictatorships in the Third World:

> Why should a dictatorship of the Left which sets as its priority health care, literacy, land reform, and equality of opportunity be an automatic "enemy," and a dictatorship of the Right that exercises power in behalf of a few landowners and industrialists be an automatic friend?

Where such a dictatorship of the Left, striving for equality of opportunity, is to be found is not specified. Tanzania? Vietnam? Cuba? Perhaps, in Barnet's view, giving all people the choice of shutting up or going to jail constitutes equality of opportunity?

This book is filled with such curiosities. It should be read by anyone who may imagine that because the New Left has lost its bravado, it may have also changed its mind.

The Spirit of Enterprise

WEALTH AND POVERTY. By GEORGE GILDER. *Basic Books. 306 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by ADAM MEYERSON

As a work of entrepreneurship, George Gilder's book has succeeded far beyond the wildest expectations of Gilder himself or his publishers. A year ago, Gilder was known as the author of some rather idiosyncratic attacks on feminism. Today he is the toast of talk shows and claims to be seeking tax shelters for his new-found income. *Wealth and Poverty* has become a best-seller and the most hotly discussed book in Washington. President Reagan likes to give it away as a present, while budget director David Stockman calls it "promethean in its insights." With its unabashed defense of capitalism, its attack on the excesses of the welfare state, its emphasis on both religious faith and the family, and its argument for supply-side cuts in marginal tax rates, *Wealth and Poverty* is also the best single book for understanding many of the economic and social ideas influencing the domestic policies of the Reagan administration.

The first section of *Wealth and Poverty* is a defense of capitalism against what Gilder sees as three sets of enemies: egalitarians, whose redistributive tax policies stymie the creative potential of entrepreneurs; pessimists, who think unplanned market economies are incapable of handling all the resource scarcities and uncertainties of the modern world; and half-hearted proponents of capitalism, who prefer capitalism to other economic systems but nevertheless see it as morally vacant or, worse, centered on greed.

The great folly of the egalitarians, Gilder argues, is to view

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ADAM MEYERSON, *a new contributor, is an editorial page writer for the* Wall Street Journal.

Dieter Bauer

is about a Jewish kid in Nazi Germany whose parents get nailed in 1937, and then what happened to him in Argentina and America. No spook story–nothing supernatural–no subjective interpretive art form this *Dieter Bauer*–just a good yarn about sensitive, accomplished people. I always thought that was storytelling. Perhaps I'm not wrong.

H. J. MOFFIE

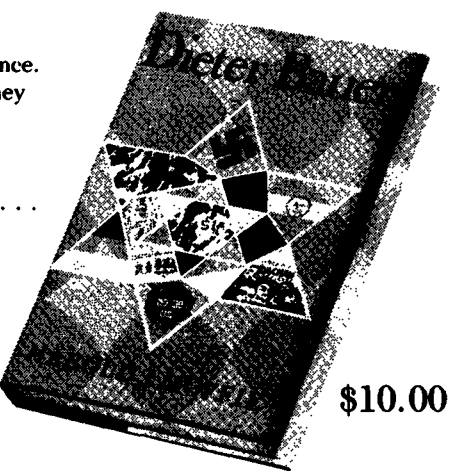
"Dieter finished to a poignant silence. He looked over at the wall clock. They had been talking for over two hours.

"His mother quietly asked, 'Any judgements, Dieter?'

"He thought for a moment. Then . . . 'Yes, Mother, just one. If dad could have been here to listen to your story, he would have been so very proud of his wife. He admired strength and resourcefulness. I'm so very proud of you. Not many could have survived. You're quite a woman. Isn't it funny how the fates decide? If nothing had ever happened, we would have had a simple, sweet life in Germany.'

'I've thought about that so often, Dieter. Adversity exacts a terrible price, and I do not recommend it to the faint-hearted. But to the survivors there is a reward, and in our particular case it seems to be this . . . That without your father's early death, you would have been less of a man, and I, barely a woman.' "

Quoted from *Dieter Bauer*



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wealth as a "zero-sum game." Together with classical economists for the last two centuries, Gilder contends that there are mutual gains from trade and that one of the keys to prosperity is "the belief that the good fortune of others is also finally one's own." But in a departure from classical economics that owes much to the work of Joseph Schumpeter, Gilder sees entrepreneurial innovation as the driving force in economic advancement. What disturbs him most about egalitarian tax policies is that they rob entrepreneurs of the venture capital they need to bring new goods and services to market.

The chief threat to "capitalist ferment and creativity," Gilder writes,

> is taxation with rates so progressive—graduated so steeply to capture increasing portions of larger incomes—that the rich refuse to risk their money. Wealth is withdrawn from productive uses, hoarded in gold or collectibles, or put in tax shelters (businesses of little economic value except in relation to the tax laws).

Gilder's rationale for cutting marginal tax rates is not to "defend established privilege" or make the rich richer, as reviewers such as Michael Kinsley in the *New Republic* and Michael Walzer in the *New York Review of Books* have contended. It is to induce the rich to invest more productively in the U.S. economy—whether through their own efforts or, more likely, by financing entrepreneurs.

A critical assumption here is Gilder's notion that the world—and in particular the U.S. economy—is full of opportunities for entrepreneurs to exploit once they have the incentive and the wherewithal. Unlike many of the Cassandras who dominate economic writing, Gilder does not worry about the depletion of natural resources. Wealth, he argues, consists in people's "morale and ingenuity," not in physical resources, which is why Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, with virtually no resources but their populations, are rapidly advancing while Saudi Arabia with all its oil billions is still an underdeveloped country. Nor is Gilder dismayed by the troubles of the U.S. steel and auto industries; in fact, he sees their decline as a necessary part of the shift to the revolutionary new technologies of microprocessors, lasers, and bioengineering.

Gilder is not bothered in the least by all the risks and uncertainties of the future; on the contrary, he is confident that market economies are best suited to adapt to them. "Socialism," he writes, "presumes that we already know most of what we need to know to accomplish our national goals." Market capitalism, by contrast, with its multitude of experiments and its reliance on individual creativity and initiative, allows a much more flexible response to a "world of unfathomable complexity, ignorance, and peril."

Gilder's most ambitious defense of capitalism is his effort to ground it in religious faith and altruism. Most defenders of capitalism—from Adam Smith to Irving Kristol—have accepted as a given that the system is propelled by the self-interested profit motive. Not Gilder. For him, "capitalism begins with giving"; he ascribes its origins to such practices as potlatching among the Kwakiutl Indians, where rival chieftains would try to outdo each other in giving away food and treasure to guests, in the expectation that greater hospitality would be returned. In like fashion, says Gilder, the modern entrepreneur "gives" his energy, his imagination, his organizational ability. He willingly sacrifices his time and capital in order to provide a new good or service, even though he knows his rewards are uncertain.,

To make sacrifices in the face of this uncertainty, says Gilder, the entrepreneur must be motivated by some kind of faith. At points in *Wealth and Poverty*, this faith is akin to what Keynes called "animal spirits," at points it is simply the entrepreneur's bullheaded confidence in his own abilities. But at still other points, Gilder thinks the entrepreneur needs "confidence in a higher morality: a law of compensation beyond the immediate and distracting struggles of existence." Only such a belief in higher morality, he asserts, could have sustained the efforts of the overseas Chinese, the Mormons, and other groups afflicted with economic hardships to improve their lot. Successful capitalism requires not only "faith in man, faith in the future, faith in the rising returns of giving, faith in the mutual benefits of trade." It also requires "faith in the providence of God."

IN THE second section of the book, a critique of U.S. welfare programs, Gilder borrows from the insurance industry the metaphor of "moral hazard," the "danger that a policy will encourage the behavior—or promote the disasters—that it insures against." Citing studies by Martin Feldstein, he maintains that "unemployment compensation promotes unemployment." He asserts that "Aid for Families with Dependent Children makes more families dependent and fatherless." And he worries that the panoply of welfare benefits now available—AFDC, Medicaid, food stamps, housing grants and subsidies, social, legal, and child-care services—make it economically irrational for many poor people to work.

In place of existing welfare programs, Gilder proposes "a disciplined combination of emergency aid, austere in-kind benefits, and child allowances—all at levels well below the returns of hard work." In short, he wants to make welfare dependency much less attractive; "in order to succeed," he contends, "the poor need most of all the spur of their poverty." Here too, as in his discussion of wealth, a critical assumption is that opportunity abounds for those who are willing to work hard. Gilder is convinced that racism has largely been eliminated from U.S. job markets, and that there are plenty of attractive job opportunities, especially in small businesses. He dismisses the "dual labor market" theories of many economists and social critics who argue that the menial jobs usually available in restaurants, garment manufacture, and other small businesses offer few opportunities for either security or advancement.

Gilder's hostility to welfare policies is based not only on his analysis of economic incentives but also on his notions of sexual psychology. "By making optional the male

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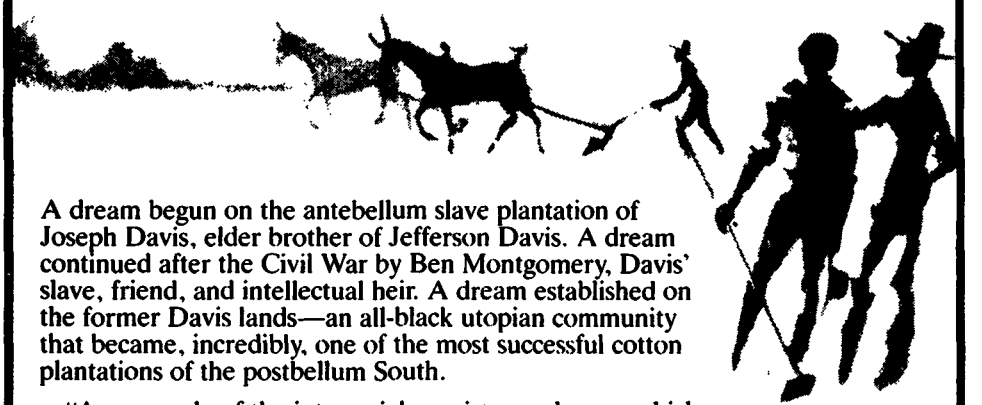
provider role," Gilder argues, "welfare weakens and estranges the prime mover in upward mobility": the father and husband who subordinates his short-term lusts for the sake of his family responsibilities. "The welfare culture tells the man he is not a necessary part of the family: he feels dispensable, his wife knows he is dispensable, his children sense it"—with a devastating effect on the fragile male ego. "Cuckolded by the compassionate state," the poor young male has to demonstrate his masculinity on the street—and that leads to crime, drugs, disruption of communities. According to Gilder, "The key to the intractable poverty of the hard-core American poor," especially blacks, "is the dominance of single and separated men in poor communities." By lowering welfare-benefit levels, Gilder hopes to bring men back to their families and to the traditional routes by which generations of poor people have escaped poverty: "work, family, and faith."

IN THE third and most timely section of the book, Gilder argues that high marginal tax rates combined with inflation are sapping the American economy of its productive potential. When state and local taxes are added to the federal take, Gilder contends that the vast majority of American households face marginal tax rates of at least 50 percent—meaning that "most Americans could expect to keep less than half of any additional earnings they might choose to seek." This tax burden is a powerful disincentive to work, savings, and other taxable economic activity. Gilder argues that the combined burden of marginal taxes and inflation has fallen most heavily on income from productive investments—and that the U.S. government has therefore been "massively and persuasively telling its citizens and corporations to disinvest in the productive capital of America."

Instead, Americans have been investing in tax shelters and housing. Homeowners have been able both to deduct their mortgage payments and to find an inflation hedge. The rich, with few opportunities to get richer through productive investment, buy Rolls Royces and live high on the hog, because, as Gilder points out, "the chief effect of steeply progressive tax rates is to lower the price of luxury and leisure in relation to investment and work." One of the principal purposes of supply-side tax cuts would be to encourage the rich to put more of their capital at risk—instead of spending it on themselves.

Unlike many supply-side enthusiasts, Gilder does not try to deny that marginal tax cuts might be inflationary. But he reminds his readers that inflation rates were fairly high in Japan during that country's most dramatic period of continuous economic growth. The difference was that the tax incentives in Japan encouraged greater capital formation. For just that reason Gilder is willing to place a higher

A white aristocrat, a black slave, a shared dream



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priority on tax cuts—particularly as they affect savings and investment—than on reducing inflation.

GIVEN the scope and ambition of *Wealth and Poverty*, it is hardly surprising that Gilder's arguments are not always consistent, and not always persuasive. If, for example, "faith in the providence of God" is so crucial to entrepreneurship, one wonders why it should also be necessary to cut marginal tax rates. Perhaps entrepreneurs require both faith *and* incentives—though this would suggest that faith is contingent on a demonstration of success. In any case, Gilder does not fully address the relation between faith in the future and the rational calculation of likely risks and rewards as each of them applies to entrepreneurship.

Moreover, even if faith in a higher morality is a practical necessity for entrepreneurship, this is not the same thing as saying that capitalism itself is ethical, nor does it justify capitalism on religious grounds. By the same token, to say that "capitalism begins with giving" is not to say that capitalism is altruistic. The Kwakiutl chieftains, as Gilder himself points out, "imposed implicit debts on their guests," who would be obliged to provide more extravagant feasts in return; the gift, in short, came with an expectation of return.

The modern entrepreneur similarly seeks a return, even if he is uncertain what it will be. To be sure, he will achieve such a return only if he is able to provide value to customers, but that is just another way of saying that the market channels self-interest into social purposes. Gilder in no way contradicts Adam Smith's dictum that "it is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest."

Gilder's reliance on the element of faith seems to desert him somewhat when he deals with the poor, who perhaps especially need not so much "the spur of their poverty" in order to succeed as they need faith in the future, confidence in their own abilities, a sense that hard work will be rewarded. Unfortunately, his recommendations for reshaping welfare policy do not really focus on ways of advancing the faith of welfare recipients in their future or in themselves.

He does, however, offer some inklings of what might be done. He mentions that "high-technology corporations like Control Data, Borg-Warner, and IBM show phenomenal success when they establish ghetto factories and have the time, patience, and federal subsidies to assemble and train a work force." He mentions, too, the critical importance of changing the fatalistic messages hammered into so many blacks by social-service agencies. One need not fully concur with Gilder's contention that racism has largely been eliminated from job markets to agree with him that "nothing is more deadly to achievement than the belief that . . . the world is a bleak and discriminatory place."

Finally, one misses some hard evidence for Gilder's hypothesis about welfare and single men. His deterministic division of sexual labor and psychology—man as breadwinner, woman as bearer and nurturer of children—would seem to ignore the experience of most poor families throughout history, where everybody has worked, including young children. There have been plenty of cultures where tightly-knit nuclear families have remained mired in poverty: Gilder himself cites Edward Banfield's study of this phenomenon in a southern Italian village. The urban lawlessness and anarchy that Gilder attributes to single men was common in U.S. cities long before the welfare state could possibly cuckold them. What is more, a number of the great fortunes of this world have been made by men still single—which suggests that male self-discipline may not depend on paternal responsibilities as much as Gilder believes.

DESPITE its flaws, however, *Wealth and Poverty* remains one of the most significant, and gracefully written, works of political economy in years. Hardly a page fails to provoke thought or to challenge some conventional assumption. Perhaps the most striking challenge flows from Gilder's exuberant optimism concerning the future of the U.S. economy. Gilder does not fret over declining industries; he is exhilarated by the many emerging technologies. He does not worry about a shift to a "service economy"; he sees a coming boom in the productivity of service industries. And the inspiring vignettes of entrepreneurs that dot the pages of *Wealth and Poverty* make it clear that the spirit of enterprise is still thriving—even though all the tax policies are skewed against it. One can imagine what energies would be released if those policies were changed.

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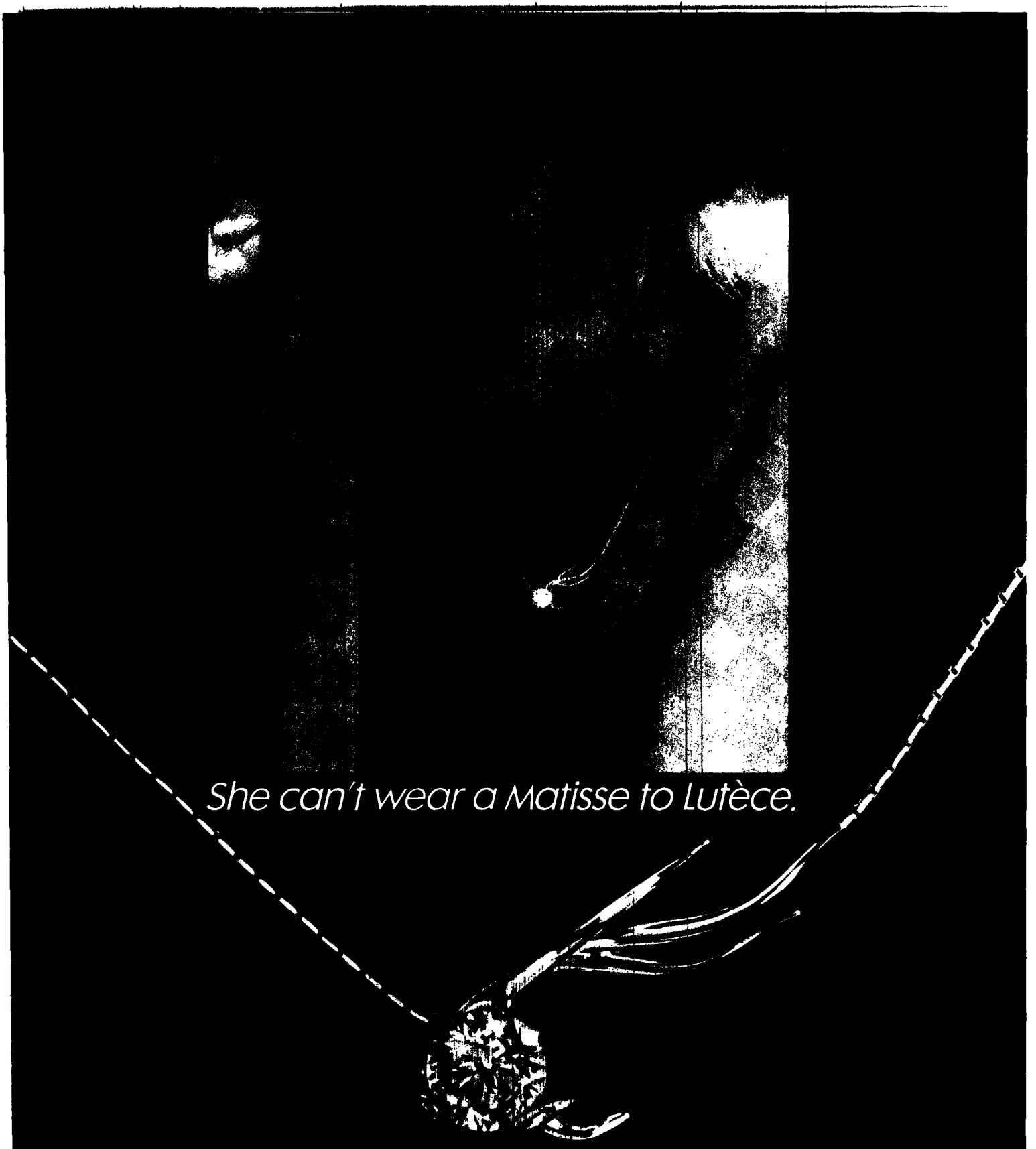

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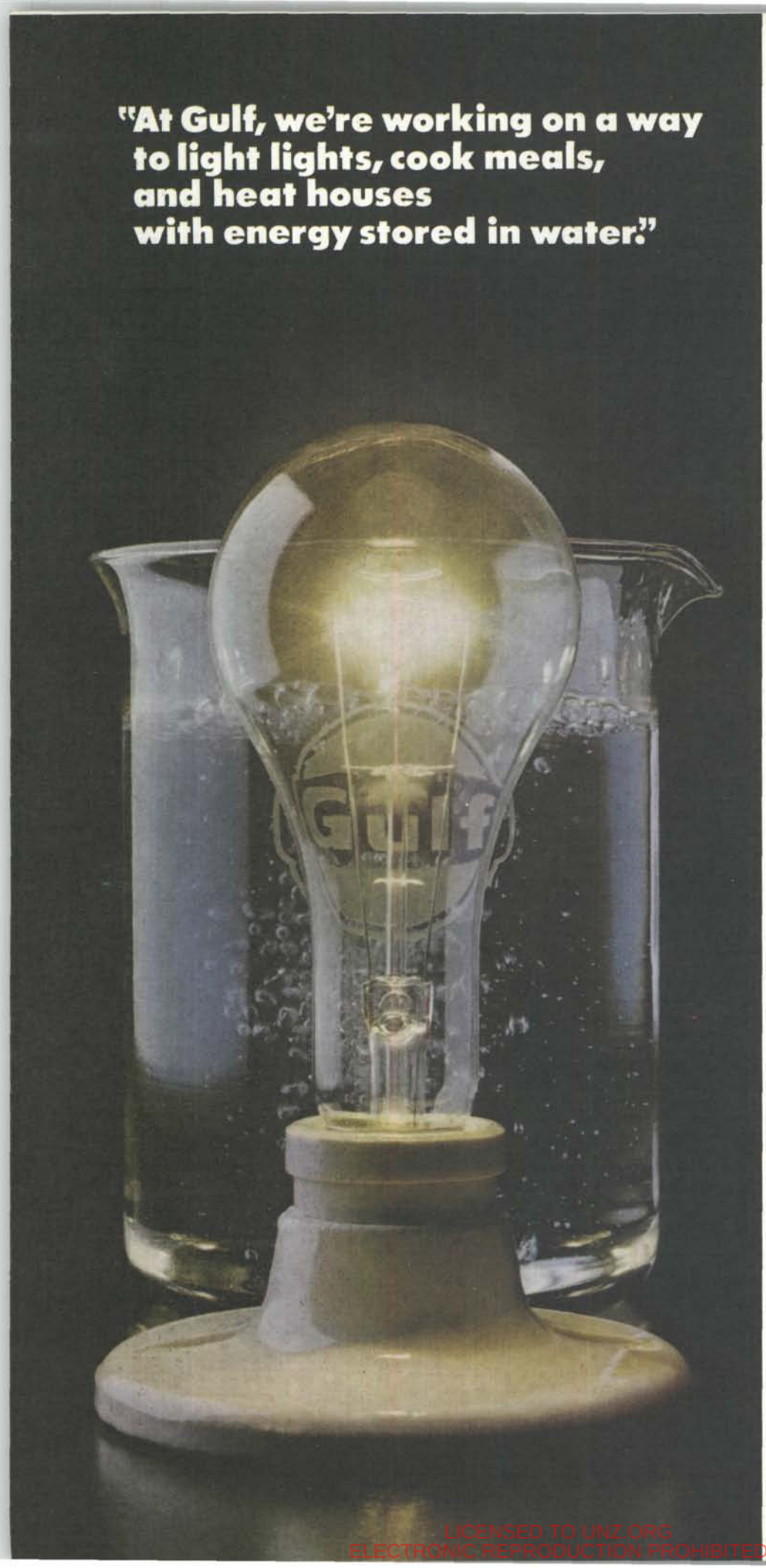

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